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'YOUR DAUGHTERS ARE NOT DAUGHTERS BUT SONS': FIELD NOTES ON BEING AND BECOMING A WOMAN TEACHER IN NEPAL AND IN CANADA

BY

LINDA ZELDA SCHULZ

A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH IN
PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

IN

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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL POLICY STUDIES

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October 5, 1995

Have you ever been at sea in a dense fog,
when it seemed as if a tangible white darkness shut you in,
and the great ship,
tense and anxious,
groped her way towards the shore
with plummet and sounding line
and you waited
with beating heart
for something to happen?
I was like that ship before my education began,
only I was without compass and sounding line
and had no way of knowing
how near the harbour was.
—*Helen Keller*, ***The story of my life*** (1954, p. 35)

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled 'YOUR DAUGHTERS ARE NOT DAUGHTERS BUT SONS': FIELD NOTES ON BEING AND BECOMING A WOMAN TEACHER IN NEPAL AND IN CANADA submitted by Linda Zelda Schulz in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in International/Intercultural Education.

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Sept 12, 1995
Date

I offer this work to the future and practising women teachers in Nepal, to the teachers whose stories save lives in Canada, particularly, Dr. Margaret Haughey, Dr. D. Jean Clandinin, and Dr. M. Kazim Bacchus, and as always to my mother, her youngest sister, and to their late mother, my grandmother (Oma). Finally, I dedicate this work to my youngest brother, Michael Schulz, who died while I was in Nepal, because I will always remember how he had volunteered to work overseas, and that he had worked so hard to help raise the funds to get there, but he never got to go to Sierra Leone.

ABSTRACT

The low numbers of Nepalese female teachers, potentially acting as role models for girls, was the entry point for me to travel to Nepal from Canada to listen to women teachers' stories that have yet to be heard. A contest over whose voices will be heard in the public debate over educational reform in Nepal has up to now evaded what a focus on "women's/girl's multiple and fragmented experience" on being and becoming a teacher calls into question. In essence, I had worked to find the opportunity to enter into the larger public domain, as intermediary, to search for my own and other women teachers' understandings and interpretations of their experiences which have been, until very recently, a significant sacrifice in the rite of passage to teaching. I have written about the experience of being and becoming a woman and a teacher with a view to "homing": that is, returning to oneself and to one's entitlement.

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Chapter 1

WOMAN AS TEACHER[1]

When we come together, we form our own nation
of travelers, of in-betweens. Even where we've blended,
stopped trying to explain, we meet our own again and
know each other—this one understands, we speak the same
memories, dream ourselves in the same overloaded truck
rattling and bumping along in a cloud of dust as we sing.
*—Beth Rambo's (1992) poem "**Travelers**"*

Theory as discourse in action[2]

Since 1971, when women teachers became a significant concern of His Majesty's Government of Nepal (HMG-N), much has changed for women teachers, and much has remained the same.

Girls and women in Nepal became significant to HMG and non-governmental organizations because they were seen to bear the brunt of social and economic conditions which barred their participation in the educational activities of the country (Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development [CERID], 1986, 1990; Improving the Efficiency of Educational Systems [IEES], 1988; Ministry of Education and Culture [MOEC]/UNESCO, 1990; National Planning Commission, HMG-N/United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund [UNICEF], 1992). Even today, some policy analysts generally consider Nepalese women teachers only in terms of how they fit into the process of education for girls in school and, particularly, in terms of the shortage of women teachers. Ironically, the administrative outlook focuses on their "future absence, not present presence"; Nepalese women teachers are mostly significant as small numbers. This administrative outlook may be seen to arise from a contest in various discursive contexts, that is, a contest over whose voices will be heard in the public arena. Unfortunately, this outlook represents a lopsided public debate on education and development that signifies a discourse more suitable to assess production lines and profit margins, politically stable and objectively determinable (governable) properties than to assess the "fluid, ongoing process" of girls becoming and being women teachers in Nepal. Alcoff (1988) suggests that "to think of" and to construct "one's gender" within stable, determinable bounds "*is* to be the victim of ideology" (p. 399; emphasis added). The dominant discourse draws attention to discrimination, through monitoring women's/girls' participation in and access to schools, and points out barriers, with suggestions for how to remedy some of these inequities. Such discourse also seems to draw attention away from what Casey (1993), Clandinin (1993a), Middleton (1993), and a number of other authors ask us to reconsider: These assessments overlook or depreciate the efforts of women and girls being and becoming teachers.

Research question

As a woman teacher/researcher, I want to ask,

> *how* Nepalese girls have come to be teachers in contexts where men and boys outnumber and outrank women and girls in educational hierarchies and in the dominant discursive text and, furthermore, what might be learned if women teachers' life stories counted more significantly in the larger public domain?

A Nepalese woman, Mrs. Neelam Basnet, recently retired Chief of the Office of the Women's Education Project, Ministry of Education and Culture, who has been working to improve the numbers of women teachers for two decades, has succeeded in drawing attention to the general, strategic situation regarding girls' education and the need for increasing the number of women teachers. Now that her health is broken, she has taken the time to reflect. She has written, published, and distributed on her own, a little-known book of insights on education for women and girls in Nepal. Neelam Basnet is an activist who did not need to work but who answered with her life the call to improve the situation for girls and women. She interprets the situation in Nepal this way: "The low status of teachers and girls in our society has become the...stumbling block in promoting girls' education and in involving girls in the teaching profession" (Basnet, 1991, p. 116).

The predominantly male bureaucratic teams who confidently construct public policy recommendations for educational reform in Nepal do so without soliciting contemporary

Nepalese women teachers' life stories, that is, without having access to these stories in the public discourse. Singh, in his Foreword to Basnet's (1991) book, agrees that the problem of female education in Nepal reflects "a total absence of proper perspective in which the entire issue needs to be reviewed....In a way," he adds, "we seem to have resigned to the status-quo...that it is the fate of women to suffer and to remain silent."

Jones (1993) raises an alternative point with which feminist poststructuralist researchers outside Nepal are engaged: "There are dangers in a focus on power as uneven and as voluntary, and on the diversity of girls' social positioning. This conceptualisation might [also] lead too easily to a disguised...endorsement of the status quo" (pp. 164-5). But the point remains that Nepalese women teachers' life stories are yet to be heard *and* believed. For as Scheppele (1989) has stated, "Those whose stories are believed have the power to create fact."

Just as Casey (1993) has discovered by investigating the "discursive contribution of ordinary [American women] teachers working for social change," ordinary Nepalese women teachers cannot be dismissed: "For these women theorize in active and reciprocal relationships, as members of an interpretive community, and as part of a living tradition" (p. 165). There can be no doubt that these women, like the progressive American activists interviewed by Casey (1993), like the feminist New Zealand teachers interviewed by Middleton (1993), as they tell the story of their own lives, "are authors of whole new volumes of social text." And their voices raise "this sense of a social 'dialect' [as] in Bakhtin (1981) which corresponds not only to the Popular Memory Group's (1982) 'general cultural repertoire,' but also to West's (1982) 'discourse,' Gramsci's ([1971/]1980) 'collective subjective,' and Fish's (1980) 'interpretive community'" (Casey, 1993, p. 26).

Casey (1993) points out that "the vocabulary which each woman has in common with other teachers in similar circumstances is considered to be more important for the purposes of this analysis" (p. 26). As well, she concurs that

> Bakhtin's notion of the *password*, "known only to those who belong to the same social horizon," (Todorov, 1984, p. 42) applies here, for important common verbal patterns do emerge within the narratives of each particular social group of teachers in particular social circumstances. (Casey, 1993, p. 26)

And building on the notion of *password*, what is known to those who belong can be recognized by those who have been ignored. In my case, this meant allowing Nepalese women teachers to judge whether they thought it was worth their while to respond to my questions. I had worried that my membership in the white western world may have excluded me from belonging to their same social horizon, but my own background fostered a strong belief in me that may have been formed by many of the same kinds of stories told to me by my mother, father, grandmother, grandfather, and so on. Drawing on an analogy from a traditional Hindu folk narrative,

> a drop of water is part of the ocean, and its difference is only illusory. Rising from the ocean as vapor, it takes many forms (in rain, in sap, in milk, in urine, in a stream, in a river) before it rejoins the sea. (Narayan, 1991, p. 123)

As a woman teacher with a strong background in cultural, dramatic, and literary studies, I also endorse what Razack (1993, pp. 68-9; emphasis added) identifies as Trinh Minh-ha's "passionate plea for a movement away from defining and boxing ourselves into *one* subject identity":

> You and I are close, we intertwine; you may stand on the other side of the hill once in a while, but you may also be me, while remaining what you are and what I am not. The differences made *between* entities comprehended as absolute presences—hence the notion of *pure origin* and *true* self—are an outgrowth of a dualistic system of thought peculiar to the Occident. (Trinh, 1989, p. 90)

I had done my homework, for like Casey (1993), "I did not come academically unprepared to this particular point of my research" (p. 107), I also understood the "social construction" of ethnicity, race, class, and gender on both a theoretical and a "lived" level.

It is a risk 'to take one's place in whatever discourse is essential to action'

Given the political nature of my inquiry, I was not really sure what talking to Nepalese women teachers would reveal and/or signify in the end. What I had planned to do seemed very simple and straightforward: I simply wanted to talk to women whose voices were not heard in the public debate about educational reform. I believed that they had something to say to me and to others about what was really going on in schools and in the home. I see now that I believed deeply what Walkerdine (1981) reveals: "Female teachers and small girls are not unitary subjects uniquely positioned, but produced as a nexus of subjectivities, in relations of power which are constantly shifting, rendering them at one moment powerful and at another powerless" (p. 14; see also Jones, 1993).

While others may be rendered impotent with the experience of teaching in the heart of Nepal—its rural villages, remote towns, and overcrowded, polluted cities—this is not the case with Nepalese women teachers whom I met in 1993; consequently, the testimonies of these women teachers are to be especially appreciated. There can be no doubt that these women hear the voices of those in subordinate social positions and subsequently join with them "in practical transformation of the real world" (Gramsci, 1971/1980, p. 333), even while they are considered by contemporary academic intellectuals and policymakers to possess little more in theoretical assets than an illiterate village girl.

Despite the continuing focus on their lack of participation in the educational activities of the country, in other words, as an insignificant number, significant changes have occurred for girls, and other changes that would improve their situation have been duly noted by the women teachers whom I interviewed. One Nepalese woman teacher, upon shared reflection, rejected the dominant discursive con(text), or more powerful story believed as fact, which says that in the heart of Nepal the "boy is the treasure" of home and school because of his metaphoric *weight in numbers*:

> Because in Nepal we have got one very bad system, that dowry system, and when they just uh make their son more educated and they may have got more dowry…and just they wanted to give more education to the boy only.…But these days, they think now, most of the parents, those who

> have the knowledge of education, and they are thinking that uh we don't have any difference between girls and boys. (life-history interview with a Newar primary school teacher of Nepali and Social Studies, 5 May 1993)[3]

When we listen to what women teachers in Nepal are actually saying, it is also evident that knowledge and practice impinging upon girls' lives can and already is being transformed in many contexts, even where women teachers' discursive contribution to the dominant discourse is in short supply. This may be an important point for overcoming fears that women teachers, like educated girls, by virtue of the power of their life stories, may convert the custom/culture of society's traditional hierarchies for purely selfish reasons.

Neelam Basnet says it is now up to the girls and women themselves who want to become teachers. They will be the ones who change or develop a system of particular social relationships to make their dreams become possible: "It used to be that you would have to go to the villages, eat and sleep with the people, and beg them to send their daughters to school; now, their daughters want to go to school" (life-history interview, 19 February 1993).

In the pressure to regain democracy in Nepal in 1990, "all manner of professional groups—whether teachers, civil servants, or journalists—organized protests outside government offices" (according to Raeper & Hoftun, in their account of the 1990 Revolution in Nepal, 1992, p. 140). Women teachers also joined in the public demonstrations, and

> many [teachers] were killed…many were taken to jail and ["many, many, many teachers"] were terminated from their services. They were put in jail and till now, you know? So many teachers. (Magar teacher, life-history interview, 17 May 1993)

Since then, further regressive measures have occurred. Currently, in Nepal, "even the natives are desperate these days; let alone people from affluent environment. Political situation is still fluid; stability is cracking" (personal correspondence with Nepalese male doctoral graduate, a recent returnee from Canada, 12 July 1993).

In danger of being overlooked or underestimated in all of this political activity is a fact of importance depending upon one's point of view: Despite their low numbers in schools, some women teachers have begun to recognize themselves as players (or agents), and they recognize their service (or agency) as being on the frontlines (or significant within the structure/context) of Nepalese society whose schools are a "terrain on which" they "move, acquire consciousness of their position, struggle, etc." (Gramsci, 1971/1980, p. 377).

The struggle over whose voices will be heard in the public debate on educational reform in Nepal has up to now evaded what a focus on "women's/girl's multiple and fragmented experience" on being and becoming a teacher calls into question, namely, what Jones (1993) calls "the straightforward—and compelling—notion of power" (p. 157), described by Heilbrun (1988), as "the ability to take one's place in whatever discourse is essential to action and the right to have one's part matter" (p. 18).

'It is a risk to educate girls'

"It is a risk to educate girls," said one Nepalese (Gurung) woman teacher, suggesting the uneven relationship between ideology and behavior (from handwritten note, 5 May 1993). The South Asian subcontinent, of which the Hindu Kingdom of Nepal is a part,

> even when restricted to those areas that are predominantly Hindu, is a vast and variegated region subject to immense geographic, historic, economic, sectarian, caste and other differences—all of which are reflected in the diversity of women, their life-styles and their positions *vis-à-vis* men. (Allen, 1990, p. 1)

Nepal's dominant discursive context consists of a hotly disputed turf war over whose voices will be heard (see Bista, 1991). As a Nepali "insider," Dor Bahadur Bista (1991) asserts that "ignorance" or silence, by way of whose social context is heard and, thus, whose is counted,

> is used to support a major distortion in the characterization of the Nepali people. Without any real information to the contrary, the tendency within the administration is to perceive Nepal as a country with a predominantly homogen[e]ous [Hindu] religious and cultural pattern. (p. 153)

High caste Hindus have been portrayed as the majority of the population, but while in actuality a minority, they are a powerful one, for as Bista (1991) adds: "A vast majority of teachers, university professors, academicians, intellectuals and journalists are the high caste Hindus" (pp. 153-4). He does not propose that we count how many of these are women and how many are men.

While this point is not being argued much further here, such a possibility moves this researcher to find connections with how women are perceived in Hinduism, where renunciation is, and has been for a very long time, a central value (Allen, 1990, p. 2). Allen, whose field research on ritual, politics, and gender relations has taken him to Vanuatu, Nepal, and Ireland, notes "it is, as in so many cultures, the male who is most likely to be the renouncer—the one believed to have the greatest aptitude for…achievement" (p. 2). Furthermore, "woman became an enemy," that is,

> whether we look at her from the earlier, Aryan, or from the later, Hindu point of view which made woman both a help as well as a hindrance, she has been the ally of life, the ally of the gods, and has kept us chained to this earth, to life, and stopped us from moving either towards divinity or towards non-being. (Lal, 1970, pp. 12, 78)

The theme of renunciation, "both as ideology and as way of life, has occupied a central position in the development of Hindu social and religious institutions from time immemorial" (Allen, 1990, p. 4).

"The development of a social hierarchy based on notions of relative purity," that is, the high caste Hindu seeks to stand

> aloof from all that he judges to be impure.…has had a doubly unfortunate effect on the lives of Hindu women.…Hence we find, perhaps to a degree unparalleled in human affairs, a rigorous control of female sexuality.…One may fairly say of Hindu ideology that men consistently use it in order to control and dominate women.…The Hindu woman is therefore in the unfortunate position of either experiencing a degree of autonomy, but at the cost of lowly position on the prestigious caste hierarchy, or high-caste status but at the cost of submission to rigorous male control. (Allen, 1990, pp. 4-19)

"When a renouncer is regarded by disciples as a teacher, he or she becomes a Guru," and Narayan (1991) adds that the Guru, *gurudev*, or "Guru God" is "often credited with supernatural powers such as the ability to read minds, peer into the past or future and transform fate" (p. 115). One Nepalese woman teacher I interviewed who suffered the crippling effects of polio as a child and who had become an orphan at the age of three told me that the village people referred to her as "Guru-aamaa," *aamaa* meaning *mother* in Nepali. Having been given the opportunity of education, by a *female* sponsor, and seeing how it had changed the "fate" of her life, I asked her, "Why do you think it's so important for girls, for instance, to learn to read?" *Guru-aamaa* replied:

> I am very much interested about this. Just my life…I am lame, and if I didn't get a chance to study…I can be *mad* then. There wasn't any idea to live my life, so that [female sponsor], who gave me this chance to study up to [Class] 9, so that's very great, I am certainly most grateful. Sometimes when I was working…in the village…once a group of people, they were talking about "oh," everybody say to me, "Guru-aamaa," in Kathmandu, everywhere, they said "Guru-aamaa," instead of my name. "Ahh, now she's *Guru-aamaa*"….And then, they were talking about me, I heard, "If she is not educated, she couldn't do any work. Ahh. Its nice to see she educated otherwise she couldn't live her life." They were talking about *me*. (life-history interview, 4 May 1993)

What might the "idea to live" her life have been for an uneducated and very vulnerable girl who is also lame? This teacher defines it as a narrow escape from becoming "mad."

Narayan (1991) points out that in cultures of the sort that anthropologists have traditionally studied, when the coherence of the self is threatened by physical pain and mental distress, individuals have called out to those who can use their story to teach and to heal. While the above-mentioned teacher comes from a self-described "poor" background, another woman teacher I interviewed, who is related to the Rana ruling caste in Nepal, provides the following account about what it is like to be a woman and to be considered "mad":

> I'm going to tell you one incident….Because when I was in —, every time I saw one woman, she was insane, you know, insane, yes, she was insane, that woman, she was uh young, you know. And she, sometimes, she didn't use any clothes properly. And, but she was uh, living in uh the courtyard of a uh temple, you know? She used to live there, at night. The people, in the daytime, the people used to throw the *stone* on her, and at night the people used to go there and they *rape* her. And then she became pregnant, you know? People used to laugh at her. They used to point, "and whose this thing?" They used to point "and whose baby?" And she used to say, "*yours*." She used to reply like this, "*Yours*," everyone they asked her, and to everyone she said, "*yours*." Then people used to run away from her because uh this is very embarrassing thing for them….Later on she gave birth of the baby, you know. She used to love her baby. The people wanted to steal the baby from her. But she, she loved her. She died later on, you know. And the baby, she was from one place to another

> place, and people, they used to take work from her, all these things, you know. When I saw these things I thought one story about her. And I just satirically told them, society, *you* are the responsible for her life, *you* are the responsible. Because *you* have spoiled the life of that woman. So now *you, you* are the main culprit, I just pointed out. (*Guru-lekhika* [woman teacher as author of short stories], life-history interview, 29 April 1993)

A teacher telling a story like this is both "persuasive and nonconfrontational" (Narayan, 1991). For this kind of storyteller "is like a therapist, because [s]he doesn't change anything but tells stories so people can recognize their outlook and make their own choices" (Prabhu, in Narayan, 1991, p. 130). At this juncture, we may very well ask how is it possible that such stories carry powerful, personal meanings for us? Narayan (1991) explains: "The answer lies in the ambiguity and multivocal form of the story: by using a story rather than a straight-forward assertion," *Guru-aamaa* and *Guru-lekhika* allow "different people to read in their own perspectives, to engage with the text in their own way" (p. 127; see also Bruner & Gorfain, 1984; Jackson, 1982). Through stories, like these, we are not only reminded about our own feelings, we are asked to reconsider our own subjectivities (perception and agency) and communities where we may tap an emotional resonance that transcends cynicism and naïveté.

Nepalese women teachers are not apolitical, with no interest in engaging with the public discourse of the day, but, according to one Gurung teacher, they often have no extra time. The elements of time, working and living conditions, *and* the lack of an empathic larger community wherein the stories *their* lives tell can be heard, shared, and put to use, are significant impediments to Nepalese women teachers engaging in larger circles of public debate.

If we accept that it is a risk to educate girls in Nepal, why do some girls choose service to community as their educational agenda even when they have delimited personal ambitions, whether in Nepal or elsewhere? As *Guru-aamaa* points out, this is not going against the grain, for this is what is expected from Nepalese girls after all: "They need work from the girls, women, work, work, work only and children, children, children, that's all" (life-history interview, 4 May 1993).

How much do daughters have to do before they are valued? If it is a risk to educate girls, I am not just calling out to Nepalese women teachers' life stories to answer these questions. In this case, *I* am also asked to reconsider my own story of a girl growing into a woman teacher.

It is a risk to educate girls/women to talk about their lives

Sharing life stories is remaking theory

It is not unusual for one woman to ask another to talk about her life. Drawing upon her educative experience of women's consciousness-raising groups in the 1970s, in New Zealand, Middleton (1993) articulates well what I found to be true. Women have often talked this way with one another: "Such sharing of stories had been the method of…making knowledge" (p. 65). Middleton (1993) captures this point, which is equally relevant to my study:

> The genesis of my research questions, then, lay deep in the tensions and conflicts of my everyday life. The origins of my methodology were the ways we women related to one another—the ways we made knowledge about our lives as women. (p. 65)

For women teachers, it is becoming apparent that there may be no split between personal and intellectual dilemmas, both public and private. Whether we are women teachers from Canada or from Nepal, working in an urban or a rural setting, it is being suggested that we encounter "similar reactions and experiences in a very different environment": Such intergenerational/international conversations may also reveal that "you think your own experiences are so individual, and then, in reading it, you realize…it's only individual because our education forces us to 'become individual'" (two American women doctoral candidates' response to Middleton's [1993] sharing of New Zealand life-history documents, p. 157).

Sharing life stories is remaking practice

Sharing life stories raises "the question of collectively attaining a single cultural 'climate,'" as Gramsci (1971/1980, p. 349) puts it, that is, one where women teachers *can* talk and listen to one another. Such discursive achievement is significant because it is part of the larger "process of enlarging the possible discourses on/for" and with girls/women "and thus the range of feminine subject positions available to them in practice" (Jones, 1993, p. 162). Such discursive achievement can also alter the possibilities for teachers' practice. The act of sharing life stories remakes teaching and learning as a site of cultural practice, as a publicly contested site where we interpret what it means to be a teacher and a woman, and it puts women teachers, collectively, in a much stronger position to contest (or accept) those meanings, and what they signify in practice (Jones, 1993).

Such discursive achievement can also reinforce the need to educate girls to talk about their lives, especially in situations where and when the most powerful stories position girls/women as destructive yet potentially creative, where and when the most powerful stories say that for the good of society women and girls need stringent external controls over their agency, that is, over the positions available to them in practice. Such discursive achievement can bring the individual out of herself and into the collective, choosing to become political in specific ways, within particular social relationships (Casey, 1993). As Narayan (1991) says,

> Whether personal or collective, stories construct versions of reality that endow experience with meaning. Stories, I believe, both teach and heal by encouraging individuals to observe and reflect on the personal self rather than to blindly identify with it. (pp. 127, 132)

Stories that contemporary lives tell can also be mined as a resource for perspective: one which speaks back to society that not only is our work (practice) as women and as teachers to be recognized, but our story (text) of what we encounter on our journey from girl to woman teacher is valuable, too:

> We live our lives through texts. They may be read, or chanted, or experienced electronically, or come to us, like the murmurings of our

> mothers, telling us what conventions demand. Whatever their form or medium, these stories have formed us all. (Heilbrun, 1988, p. 37)

If it is a risk to ask girls/women to talk about their lives, to recognize what they have achieved, it is a risk worth taking.

A reconsideration of life stories as a story with the power to teach

While I had never desired to travel to Nepal, when I was offered the chance to investigate the situation for and with women and girls in Nepal, something stirred my imagination. I realized, only when Canadian women teachers kept persisting in their question about why I had gone to Nepal, that I had to break out of my own silence on this point, that a story told to me by my mother about her life had actually prompted my interest. It was not until I was interviewing women teachers in Nepal that I understood what it was that had made me travel to this isolated country: An image; an incomplete sequence. The image of my mother as a young, village girl in Germany and Romania, poor, forever hungry, entering a school. But before going in, she, a girl with unfulfilled eyes, who was supposed to say "Heil Hitler" to his picture overhead, ducks her head and is caught trying to run into class without doing so. She is punished and punished again when she gets home. Word travels fast in small villages. The whole scene suggested melancholy, no destination. Eventually, having experienced the loss of her country in a migration to Canada with her family, she gets to an age where she is "forced" to marry and, in her stories, this greater loss is mixed up with the loss of her personal ambition. Thus, it is a metaphor which I seek to understand, one that is contained in the story of her small, sane, act of spirit, of defiance, something which signifies so much to me.

In the act of writing the above, I realized I had not thought about my mother's words or ever really reflected upon them during my time spent in school and in teacher training. But one of the first interviews I had with a woman teacher outside of Kathmandu, in a medium-sized town, gave me the most personal encounter with who I am and who she is at this stage in our lives. Her mother had also advised her, "you have to get married":

> You know in Nepal…everyone in our society uh…girls must be married they used to say. If they don't get married then it will be hard for, for us in old age. So my mother used to say you have to get married.…But uh in comparison, between Nepal and America, its very different. You're living in different way, we are living in different way.…But you people are not forced to get married! But in Nepal we are forced to get married. But, but our, but my parents they didn't force me to marry. But my mother used to say you have to get married. My mother used to say, "you have to get married, if you don't get married *right now*, then you will be old and no one will, will marry you. And in old age, we'll get, you have to make, you'll have to face a lot of problems. This is not America! This is not Singapore! This is not [laugh] Britain! This is Nepal. You have to live like a Nepali," she used to say. (life-history interview, 22 April 1993)

The above teacher and I are both 36-years-old, we are from very different contexts, and yet we had lived the same story. While she tended to concentrate on the dissimilar, I wanted to know more about what was the same about her life and mine. Throughout our time together, I sensed some feelings of resentment that I did not understand at the time. While having agreed to our interview, she seemed very suspicious of me; and during the interview, she commented on my having opportunities to travel and on my being rich (she wanted to know what I ate, if I took a taxi everywhere), she did not believe that Westerners were forced to marry as Nepali women were, although she said she was happily married herself, and then she would not agree to any more interviews. However, she did not rescind on her first interview, where she had spoken freely and at some length about how she came to be a teacher and about her "hard" life as a teacher, mother, daughter, and wife. Although when I asked her if she could tell me the story of how she came to be a teacher her first reaction was to laugh: "Story! No, *no* story, I don't think so [laugh]. I don't think so" (life-history interview, 22 April 1993).

Thus, it can be argued that this Nepalese woman has learned to measure her life within the limitations constructed by others, those whose voices make up the dominant interpretations of the meaning of education, even discounting that her life is a story with the power to teach; but acting within these limitations, she nevertheless has some choice, and she has some power, and she had stories to tell.

The Nepalese woman teacher, mentioned above, felt compassionate toward her female students who are between the ages of 14 to 15 because she said that something happened to them then, that is, when they change and think of nothing else but marriage, boys, and babies. While she does not teach her students to avoid marriage, she is trying to get the girls to do better in their secondary science courses because *she* knows that they can do better. Her story about her own life says that girls should learn science, if only so that they can, at the very least, help sons *and* daughters with their science homework.

The Nepalese woman teacher, mentioned above, questioned the possibility of collectively attaining a single cultural "climate," in her own words, even while she had shared with me private details about her life as a woman and a teacher. This was a significant point which she raised within the context of our encounter. It reflected as well a political and personal stance about the opportunities which she thought I had as a woman teacher in Canada and which she did not have as a woman teacher in Nepal. I felt that she was calling out. I wanted to know more about her, yet she did not fully trust me for she had missed out on opportunities in her life. She did and she did not want me to interpret her life for her. She did not want to discuss anything but what had happened to her life as a woman and a teacher. She said that she was not satisfied with her life because she had not realized her life's ambition. I felt that she did not want me to know more, or to press her for more details, because she thought that I might judge her, and yet I wanted to listen.

A reconsideration of Nepalese women teachers' life stories as powerful

The women teachers I interviewed ranged from having just recently been hired to having taught for over thirty years. Their own words rang out loud and clear, creating significance within the "virtual vacuum" (Casey, 1993) of research on/for and with Nepalese girls/women who are (or who are becoming) teachers. These women are exceptional. They would have to be exceptional, not only to overcome the social and cultural barriers, both public and private, of a physically taxing environment, but also to see the meaning of their lives recognized in the dominant discursive text.

The noticeable fact that rural teachers in developing countries, especially females, have the worst conditions of service is also true for Nepal (Avalos, 1991; Caillods & Postlethwaite, 1989; Dove, 1986; Lockheed & Verspoor, 1990; McNamara, 1989). Nepalese women teachers' life stories tell us how they struggle with low salaries, an overburden of family and household responsibility, few opportunities for professional advancement, poor housing, illness, isolation, political and sexual harassment, and a lack of professional support by way of constructive supervision, curriculum guides, and materials (see Avalos for an international overview, 1991). Their life stories suggest that if their tireless work under these conditions continues to be unrecognized and unrewarded they, too, may ultimately face an existential crisis that has to do with whether they should or can continue in this service. Neelam Basnet (1991) writes,

> though there is a move in our neighbouring countries for the feminization of teacher education, female teachers are difficult to be employed in our schools. The paradox is that those who have been serving in the schools for years are trying to quit the job as early as possible. (pp. 115-6)

Even when they have been singled out as "extraordinary," they are criticized by others jealous for recognition but who are not willing to take on their load or share the work. One woman, an unmarried Gurung teacher, called by family and friends a name that "*means heart*" (personal correspondence, 24 November 1993), I will refer to as *Guru-heart*. She is also described as one of the most "extraordinary" teachers in the region by a former principal who hired her. *Guru-heart* told me that since the beginning of 1993 she was "never frustrated like this in my whole life" (life-history interview, 5 May 1993). She was no longer satisfied that the meaning of her life was necessarily tied to being a teacher because being a teacher in her school was making her feel powerless.

Constructing Nepalese women teachers and girls as disadvantaged and as socialized within oppressive patriarchal structures is not the end of the story. But their extraordinary life stories are butting up against others' more powerful stories.[4] A Nepalese man, Rishikesh Shaha (1993, p. 10), who has worked hard to combine academic scholarship with pioneering political leadership, and who has been imprisoned several times, says that

Nepali society is informed by stories about a "spirit of reverence for hierarchy based on caste and age" and, I might add, gender, that is, what is appropriate "in a caste-ingrained society."

One woman teacher, who is also a writer (*Guru-lekhika*) and whose biography has been set forth in a thesis, told me personal things about her life and about the tragedy of her mother's life as *wife number three* of one of the Rana men. She said that she told me things that she did not tell her male biographer because she was saving it to tell to someone who shared her intent to make known what life is like for girls and women in Nepal. And like Casey (1993), "I became the intermediary" (p. 17). I, too, had written and published short stories about my own, my mother's and father's, and my grandmother's and grandfather's life. I had lived *and* written about "the straddling of two or more cultures," as Anzaldua (1987, p. 80) writes, and in my desire for a professional life of service, I understood the straddling of the worlds of daughters *and* sons. I passed muster, I could carry intimate meanings into the public sphere. I could see what I was being called for and what I was being asked to pass along: To participate more publicly in Trinh Minh-ha's (1989) "ground-clearing activity"; To teach about the *mestiza* consciousness described by Gloria Anzaldua in her (1987) book *Borderlands/La Frontera*, that is, "by creating a new mythos—that is a change in the way we perceive reality, the way we see ourselves, and the ways we behave" (p. 80). For those who proclaim new mythos, I retain my position as a daughter of German-Romanian displaced persons that there can never be only one final, better answer. Yet in activist women teachers' discourse, we may find

> another teacher whose concerns do not coincide with the military-industrial logic of the national reports on education; here is another example of "an immediate response to action" which obeys "different laws from those of individual profit" (Gramsci, [1971/1980] p. 140); here is another woman who hears the voices of poor…children, and answers with her life. (Casey, 1993, p. 165)

But as Heilbrun (1988) does *not* believe, so I do *not* believe that these "new" tellings of old stories by women teachers "will find their way into texts if they do not *begin* in oral exchanges among women in groups hearing and talking to one another" (p. 46).

When *Guru-lekhika* began to write and publish stories about growing up in a family where her mother never questioned anything that happened simply because as a woman she never realized that she *could* question with her life, her critical readers wondered why she never wrote any happy endings. Because she was writing and reconsidering not only her own, but her deceased mother's (and brother's) all too real life of "suffering," she had never thought to change what happened to her female characters; one day, she realized that she could write her women characters alternative, happier endings. *She* could write them out of bad situations:

> *Linda*: I find this, that's interesting that you use your writing to teach. Would you agree with that? You use your writing to teach.
>
> *Guru-lekhika*: Yes.
>
> *Linda*: So that's another way to teach.
>
> *Guru-lekhika*: Ah yeah, to teach in a school?
>
> *Linda:* Well, to teach people who read. When they read your writing, when they read your stories, it is another way for you to teach them.
>
> *Guru-lekhika*: [Interrupting] I want to say something through my stories. I want to point out the *defect*, you know, and the conservative ideas of the people that uh you are doing the wrong thing, you know, you are doing the wrong thing. Uh so you can correct yourself, by this way. Before, in my two collections, stories, I had no idea these things. I always used to put the problem *only* in my story.
>
> *Linda*: Oh.
>
> *Guru-lekhika*: I used to put the problem, there was no solution for that, you know.
>
> *Linda*: Yes.
>
> *Guru-lekhika*: And the women always were suppressed by my *pen*, you can say, you know, by my *pen*, by my thought, you can say. They were always suppressed. They have to bear, they have to *suffer*. They were always treated very *badly* from the *men*. And what, uh suddenly, one critic, he pointed out that in [my] story these things happen. Then later on I also realized, yes, why, we can go against, we can *protest*, you know.
>
> *Linda*: Yes.
>
> *Guru-lekhika*: We can *protest*, not only from here, but when I...uh it came suddenly in my mind, then, we should protest, we shouldn't be dominated

> by the men [here a small space is left in the middle of an utterance for call and response]...
>
> *Linda*: No
>
> *Guru-lekhika*: the whole of our life, you know. So I started writing this. And then, now my character, the women, they *protest*. Yes, yes. (life-history interview, 29 April 1993)

This was a turning point for her as a teacher, a woman, and a storyteller. As a teacher, she questioned the intent of the ruling classes, the predominance given over to Hindu mythology, and the impact of the stories of gods and goddesses as taught to Nepali girls and boys. She writes and publishes stories to teach (outside of school) an alternative pantheon dedicated to raising the potential of girls and women in Nepal. She writes to teach "alternative and psychically liberating realities" (Narayan, 1991, p. 131).

We need to enter a more powerful point of view of women teachers as another position from which to evaluate women's/girls' "educative relationship" (The Among Teachers Community flyer [A_CT], 1993). In her identity as a public persona, speaking to me in the very public space of the school staffroom, *Guru-aamaa* honored both her autonomy and interdependence, but now I see how she allows me to juxtapose "sentiments common in ordinary speech which express values of honour and modesty, against poetic depictions of the self as weak and vulnerable, moved by deep feelings of love and longing" (White, 1992, p. 153; see also Abu-Lughod, 1986, p. 35, for discussion of these concepts and poetry amongst a Bedouin tribal group in Egypt). In her act of private writing to me she has this serious lament:

> I want to develop my career as my friends. But my principal didn't help me. He wants my lot of efforts in his school. They all said my study was enough. The principal at that time took advantage from my work but did not allow me to go ahead. My husband also didn't help me. I did my SLC exam [School Leaving Certificate after ten years of schooling] after having my second baby. I passed....I had great aspiration to join diploma [two years after SLC], i.e., in Home Science but my aspiration never get fulfilled. Now I am 50 years, getting feeble. (*Guru-aamaa*, life-history survey, 1993)

Women teachers, whether from rural or urban backgrounds, and whether working in urban or rural settings world-wide, are in safe and imaginative/empathic spaces—like narrative, poetry, and dramatic art "side by side" with the ordinary dominant discourse "comment on one another" (White, 1992, p. 153; Abu-Lughod, 1986, p. 244)—beginning to tell each other about their lives, the meaning(s) they have given to their lives and practice, both public and private, that is, how as girls they grew into teachers. Thus, even in the most unhappy educative situations, there are certain historical acts which "stand out like little islands of excitement, energy and hope" (Kozol, 1991, p. 47):

> An historical act can only be performed by "collective [wo]man," and this presumes the attainment of a "cultural-social" unity through which a multiplicity of dispersed wills, with heterogeneous aims, are welded together with a single aim, on the basis of an equal and common conception of the world, both general and particular, operating in transitory bursts (in emotional ways) or permanently (where the intellectual base is so well-rooted, assimilated and experienced that it becomes passion). Since this is the way things happen, great importance is assumed by the general questions of language, that is, the question of collectively attaining a single cultural "climate." (Gramsci, 1971/1980, p. 349)

In *Guru-heart*'s life story, such an historical act is observed and can now be revealed. She has prepared an answer for one woman/girl (as we play out that relationship which is not dissimilar to mother/daughter with each other) who is interested in how she came to be a teacher and contained in that story is her "lived" response to one of her mother's stories about what is possible for a girl growing up in Nepal. She answered that refrain with her own life, and now her life story can inform others that "a daughter is no less than a son." This becomes an example of what Bakhtin (in Clark & Holquist, 1984) refers to as the "immediate social situation and the broader social mileau wholly determine—and determine *from within*, so to speak—the structure of utterance" (p. 215, emphasis added):

> I was born in a village in Nepal. I have a very big family of — members including my parents....In the village where I live people are uneducated, they are not interested in educating their children because they don't know the importance of education. At that time few children used to go to school. Very small number[s] of girls were getting primary education, no question about secondary or higher secondary for the girls. So the women in the village filled my mother's ears (who herself is also an uneducated woman) with the belief that it is not wise to educate girls: "They will get spoilt, they will get more freedom and take advantage of that without caring the custom and culture of the society and may do wrong things unacceptable by the society. It is a risk to educate girls. Instead, spend money on the boys' education who are the ultimate supporter of the family. What benefit is there to educate the girls? They will get married and support their

> husband's family not their parents etc. So why waste money on education for the girls?" My mother also felt this reasonable and started to put pressure on my father to stop further education of the girls. But my father did not care and turned a deaf ear to my mother....
>
> Though I am not satisfied with my teaching job from the school side I am still proud to be a teacher.
>
> The women in my village who used to go against providing education to girls have now realised that it is worthy of educating girls. Almost all my sisters are employed and supporting the family. [The village women's] daughters are struggling so those women are now repenting for not educating their girls. They now say to my mother "*your daughters are not daughters but sons.*" My brother who has his own family can save nothing to help my mother. Whatever he earns is spent on supporting his own family. Whenever my mother needs any help instead of asking my brother she comes to me, and I feel proud to help her. At least I could prove her that daughter is also no less than the son, can support the family like the sons if equal opportunity of education is provided. In that sense I am very proud of myself to be a teacher and encourage people to educate their girls. (from handwritten note, Gurung primary/secondary teacher of Science/Chemistry, 5 May 1993)

Much is revealed not only in the text of her narrative, but also through context and/or contact: the meaning to be made of her life as a woman and a teacher in Nepal as it intersects with mine as a woman and a teacher in Canada researching what it means to be a woman and a teacher in her country. This also brings to mind what Narayan (1991) signifies: If we take an excursion into the growing literature on using narrative to heal, the supposed rift between Western and traditional worlds is not altogether unbridged, many of us straddle two or more worlds ourselves. It is a story that I can understand, critically, having asked of myself: Just what have I inherited from my ancestors? (see Anzaldua, 1987; see Appendix A). Listening to Nepalese women teachers tells us that as teachers and as teacher educators in Canada ours "is a responsibility to trace the other in self" (Spivak, 1990, p. 47), a task that Razack (1993, p. 69) says "must become central to our practice."

Significance

The significance of this research is its intent to listen to the voices of contemporary, anonymous, Nepalese girls and women who are (and who are becoming) teachers. Just as Casey (1993) has done, I intend, in a deliberate reversal, to "move the most prominent speakers in the contemporary struggle over education to the edge of my analysis. This marginalization is meant not to underestimate, but rather to undermine the overpowering influence of dominant conservative discourse," and to replace them with those "ordinary, anonymous [women] whose ideas have, until now, only been known in their immediate social circles" (p. 3). In essence, I worked to find the opportunity to enter into the larger public domain, as intermediary, to search for my own and other women teachers' understandings and interpretations which have been, until very recently, a significant silent sacrifice in the rite of passage to teaching.

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[1] An earlier version of this chapter has been published. Schulz 1994. *Gender and Education.* 6(2): 183-199. The ordinary yet extraordinary notion of "woman as teacher" emerged in my ongoing lived reflection as woman, as teacher-researcher, alongside my more recent understanding, in accord with Gramsci (1971/1980), that "everything is political" (p. 357). According to Bakhtin, every "word is a bridge thrown between myself and another…it is territory shared by both addresser and addressee" (in Clark & Holquist, 1984, p. 214). I have merged these two authors' statements to become the next chapter's title. In doing so, I have attempted to build what Grumet (1994) calls "a linguistic bridge,"which she sees as one of the essential tasks of the contemporary teacher-researcher. This chapter and the ones that follow are to be a working out of thought and practice constructed around the metaphor of teaching and researching as an art (of negotiating a fine balance, somewhere between anger and complacency, attachment and detachment). It takes a while to find a balance, replicate it, refine it, and live it (while giving live performances) as women, as teachers. As a doctoral candidate and teacher-researcher, I have turned from acting to writing to understand the meaning of a theoretical construct, a gesture, a situation, an utterance, a text, or a discourse, for in educative relationship, "we must know who is speaking, and who is listening (or who is supposed to be listening)" (Casey, 1988, p. 215). Using ourselves as a place to begin "metaphorical explication as a method" can give "us a powerful insight into the often unrecognized embodiment of values" and "meaning at the center of every language project" whether that be "utterances, texts, or whole discourse systems" (Casey, 1988, p. 214; see also Kliebard, 1975). (To understand how I fit and as a chapter of growth within this interpretive community, I have written my connecting story in Appendix A.)

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[2] Smith (1987) explains *discourse* as "a conversation mediated by texts that is not a matter of statements alone but of actual ongoing practices and sites of practices" (p. 214). It has been described by Foucault as a way of conceptualizing "theories in action" (Middleton, 1993), while "theory in action" has been used by Linda Smith (1992), and "discourse in action" by Clark and Holquist (1984). In general, to see *text* and *context* as belonging to a *discourse* is not to assume a simple instrumentality. Rather, it is to contest the way *text* (e.g., of philosophy, lexicography, history, biology, political and economic theory, novel writing, and lyric poetry) and *context* (in terms of race, religion and culture) "are presumed 'politically and even historically uninnocent'" (Nandan, 1991, p. 135; Said, 1985, p. 27; White, 1992, p. 3); A *discourse*, then, as theory in action, about woman as teacher, may also be "artistically productive, not simply inhibiting" (Said, 1985), by defining "the kinds of things that can be said, who is speaking and to whom" (White, 1992, p. 1).

[3] This is a good example of a contested position or image in Nepali society. Neelam Basnet (1991) explains the dowry system in Nepal and adds that while "the government has introduced restriction on the dowry size…it has been hard to enforce these laws" (p. 15). According to a conversation I had with male Nepali graduate students (7 October 1993) in Canada, the dowry system is confined to a limited number of people in southern Nepal and, therefore, does not necessarily correspond to all of Nepal.

[4] For example, some of these powerful stories are stories of systematic educational development in Nepal, which began with the establishment of the National Education Commission in 1954 (ADB, 1991).

Chapter 2

EVERY WORD IS POLITICAL: WOMAN AS TEACHER IN NEPAL

We survive in community,
without community we could not survive.
—Roshan Chitrakar,
Nepalese teacher-researcher

We shall not cease from exploration,
and the end of all our exploring
will be to arrive where we started
and know the place for the first time.
—T. S. Eliot

A theoretical journey

When I went to Nepal, I took some overarching theories learned at university in Canada that tell a story: human capital, modernisation, dependency and underdevelopment. In learning those theories, I had learned to think, speak, and write in the language of a single solution, that of investment in schools, and I gave up on my own story that it is human beings who constitute significance in the times and spaces we call schools, who are diverse in their thoughts, needs and desires, and who do not respond to a single solution in education and development. Studied as discourse in action, these overarching theories indicate how far a dominant discourse and its discursive practices can be applied to connect the stories of women who come to be teachers to the story of the development and education of children, especially girl children and women in Nepal. However, in juxtaposition to the value given to constraints to successful investments in that country, a common theme in the theories that inform development practices, this story is not the usual story told in education and development.

Models of and strategies for education and development

Models of and strategies for "development" refer to the "process of directed change" (Lélé, 1991) in developing countries. Long before I arrived in Nepal, I had begun to question the theories that inform the process of directed change, namely, the language framing the view to sites of such practices: for instance, how the "Western, advanced, industrialized" or the "overdeveloped, richer, North" can help the "developing, or poor South" (Measor, 1994) to become modernised. We speak about countries or nations, regions within countries or nations, individuals within families, and people within institutions as being at various stages in the process of "developing." There can never be an unproblematic usage of such vocabulary, for what is "development," in terms of movement, is it not better expressed as growth and doubt? I take this to be especially problematic given that the literature of economics of education and development, a legacy of the 1950s and 1960s—human capital, modernisation, dependency and underdevelopment—"failed to include" the stories of "the majority of the human race, women, and particularly rural women until 1970" (Merchant, 1992, p. 8).

Human capital theory

Human capital theory, first postulated by an American economist, Theodore Schultz, in the late 1950s, is most responsible for the relationship between education and development (Merchant, 1992). Human capital theory cannot make sense of the differences between educational expenditure and educational outcomes in various contexts; instead, it centers on the productive capacity of the human manpower process and, in doing so, plays down the social implications of development issues, treating the improvement of the workforce as a form of capital investment (Hindson, 1992). According to Bacchus (1992a), many of those who still subscribe to this theory of development advance one view of progress: "The provision of more opportunities for education will increase the stock of human capital in a society and thus will eventually raise the level of national productivity and economic growth" (p. 2). When female education advocacy concerns have coincided with arguments derived from human capital theory about the underutilized reservoir of female labour and consequent wastage of talent in connection with visible structures like schools, they have found the warmest reception by governments in Nepal and elsewhere (Neelam Basnet, life-history interview, 19 February 1993; Wilson, 1991).

Better stock, better projects

According to a Canadian-trained official with a development bank in Nepal, female teachers serve as role models in the community, and women make better change agents than men. In his experience with projects in Nepal, "having women involved has generally resulted in better projects" (personal communication, 4 February 1993). He said that any female who has gone through the system of schooling in Nepal as it is and then has gone on to become a teacher, given the constraints,

> must be of a better stock, just capability-wise to have overcome all of those. And, therefore, when she does become a teacher, she is a role model not only because she is a teacher, but because she is more capable. And that's why she is a teacher. So I think, therefore, female teachers are absolutely critical in anything that we might want to do in this area. (personal communication, 4 February 1993)

Training the existing stock of teachers

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has designed a teacher training program for Nepal. As of 1989, in Nepal, there were 63,945 teachers, of which 7,321 were underqualified (11.45%) and 38,641 were untrained (60.42%) (MOEC/HMG-N [The Master Plan Team], 1991). ADB's current design is to assist His Majesty's Government of Nepal (HMG-N) in implementing a carefully conceived strategy in teacher training that will provide basic in-service training to the existing stock of teachers and provide adequate pre-service training to new teachers (ADB, 1991). Adequate training facilities will also need to be provided throughout the country, and this will be accomplished by the establishment of nine Primary Teacher Training Centers (PTTCs). The Ministry of Education and Culture (MOEC) is seen to lack

> an entity which can specialize in handling the many issues in teacher training and the training of other educational personnel as well as pursuing action and policy research. To meet this need, the Project includes the establishment of a National Center for Educational Development. (ADB, 1991, pp. 9-10)

ADB plans to provide funds for improved training of the key managers at the primary level—headmasters, supervisors, and district and regional education officers—and funds to initiate structural rehabilitation, that is, to improve the physical condition of existing schools and to expand classroom space by constructing new school buildings.

To corral this better stock

This is the first investment that ADB has made in primary education in Nepal. According to a senior official, "the genesis of this project really came from trying to do a very focussed intervention in primary teachers' training" (personal communication, 4 February 1993). According to this official, ADB intends to encourage female teachers within their project. Would this encouragement within structural rehabilitation involve revising the primary teacher training curriculum with women and girls in mind? The ADB official replied,

> I must be very honest with you, I think that is certainly the hope, okay? To what extent that will really happen, well, only time will tell. That is what we are talking about, but that to a certain extent can also be *jargon*. And then the government says, "Yes, yes, of course" because they know that is what we want to hear. So that is certainly our hope and certainly that is what we are talking about: curriculum development is one of the elements in our program. To what extent it will actually happen, which will then make the curriculum more geared to the female students' participation, quite honestly, I couldn't tell. (personal communication, 4 February 1993)

He was most forthcoming on the question about what he saw as the greatest challenge in teacher training: "That's a difficult question....The greatest challenge I would think is one of mindset....Why would the teacher want to be trained? What will it mean for him or her at the end of the training?" (personal communication, 4 February 1993). To this senior ADB official, the question of teacher training has never been looked at from the point of view of the teacher:

> I've always felt, we've always said that "yeah we need more trained teachers so we can have a better primary education," but the challenge is to have a good training *and* to have a teacher [who is] motivated. I think you better look at it from the point of view of the teachers themselves. (personal communication, 4 February 1993)

In order to understand the value that female teachers and female students bring to sites of education and development we must find meaning and that meaning must be broadly based. I became a teacher to escape the mindset of a peasant/artisan family displaced to Canada who were indoctrinated under a regime of German fascism. I travelled to Nepal to listen to women tell their stories about how they came to be teachers, ostensibly because there were so few women teachers and so few female students. I shared in this global assumption: "One of the keys to development is in the hand of women, and...if women gain access to education they will be able to bring about change" (Joshi & Anderson, 1994, p. 169). I shared in the belief that there exists a kind of connecting line between these vital figures and numerical realities. I did not question "an increasing focus on women's opportunities, both in formal and non-formal development strategies" catching "the eye of aid agencies, as indicated by the recent World Conference at Jomtien" (WCEFA, [March] 1990), but I did begin to question the structure of sightlines that gave the developers confidence to build one main story of progress, "where the constraints to the education of girls were again highlighted as a key factor when considering the delivery of basic education" (Joshi & Anderson, 1994, p. 169).

Asking the same old questions and tracing the shadows

In Nepal, the National Education System Plan, in 1971, was aimed at promoting women's and girls' education, and has given rise to various national plans and several projects. More than two decades have passed but the same question is still being addressed: What are the constraints or barriers to women's and girls' participation (Education Working Group NGO committee on UNICEF, 1991; Rajbhandari, 1990; MOEC/UNESCO, 1990; World Bank/UNDP, 1991)?

In recent years, much of the guess-work has been eliminated from the thinking about effective interventions to address barriers to women's and girls' education, and there are innovative and successful model programs and interventions in the field; consequently, conventional wisdom might tell us that we know enough (Bellew, Raney, & Subbarao, 1992; Bennett, 1987; Cameron & Giri, 1985; Education Working Group NGO committee on UNICEF, 1991; IEES, 1988; MOEC/UNESCO, 1990; Rajbhandari, 1990). Representatives of two multilateral donor agencies, the World Bank and the Rockefeller Foundation, believe that we do not know enough about these barriers; in addition, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) sees a need for much greater accuracy in identification of gender disparity (Education Working Group NGO committee on UNICEF, 1991). In Nepal and elsewhere, available information relies on data that is often out-of-date and generally discounts or ignores the voices of women coming to understand their own realities, and the historical/contemporary relational realities of girls and women (Education Working Group NGO committee on UNICEF, 1991).

My desire to attend school in Canada informed this research project and led me to see significance in a focus on what facilitates the participation of girls and women in schools in Nepal. The same notion re-emerged from my reading of the National Planning Commission's, HMG-N/UNICEF (1992) document *Children and women of Nepal: A situational analysis*:

> While there is some information available on why girls do not attend school, there is almost none on the factors that facilitate girls' educational participation. Research which identifies reasons why girls do not attend school should also support why they *do* attend. Findings from such studies can be used as powerful tools for advocacy in education and related sectors. (p. 50)

What the foreign aid community is advocating here is to have eyes and ears receptive to what is already going on as a theoretical standpoint: Women village teachers in Nepal with nonformal basic educations who are completing the *Cheli Beti* programme (who provide classes exclusively for out-of-school young girls aged 8 to 14 years) are noted in this document as making a space for "local women [to] gather around to cheer on their daughters" (National Planning Commission, HMG-N/ UNICEF, 1992, p. 149). And having passionately desired to gain that from going to school in Canada, I rediscovered my "scholarly passion" (Mossie May Kirkwood Interview, conducted by Wilson, 1973; Prentice, 1991) to bring into practice "emotions and aspirations," which "obey different laws" and give shape to different ideas "from those of individual profit" (Casey, 1993).

In my research in Nepal, one unmarried Gurung mountain village teacher who has taught for 23 years in her rural Nepalese birthplace was very definite. And as an artist and teacher-researcher sensitive to shadows in the female skein, I could not but notice how she wanted to have her picture taken with her mother, how her mother sat at her knee with an affectionate hand on this teacher, listening as her daughter tells all of us the story of what education and development means in this village: "If there's more female teachers, it's good for development" (translation, life-history interview, 28 May 1993). The elderly, widowed mother served tea and gathered jasmine from her garden as her offering; I wondered about her place in the story as her 41-year-old daughter answers about the significance of private service in her natal family amongst female kin, and of public service: How activity in one structural sphere is "vitally predicated" (White, 1992) on that in another. "I did not like [to] marry," she says, for

> after marriage, more burden is natural. Husband says something. Children say something, more family obligation.…I'm alone.…I don't need to think of my husband, children. I'm not supposed to think on those issues. I only think of my mother, my mother's care. That's all. I can spare other time—in education—in school. (translation, life-history interview, 28 May 1993)

White's (1992) book about her doctoral research with women in Bangladesh suggests, "women's networks extend over a wide geographical area, taking in the woman's natal family. Because of the norms regarding women's activity, the skein remains half-hidden, but is nonetheless strong" (pp. 91-2).

This sentiment is echoed by a never-married Magar teacher. She said, if women "are teachers, you know, they are builders of the nation" (life-history interview, 17 May 1993), and, thus, I refer to her as *Guru-builders of the nation*. These builders of the nation also toil in the towns and cities in Nepal, and in her example, "pulling on the threads" (White, 1992) by which women are linked. From a wealthy, well-connected family, and recently retired after more than 20 years of service in a Kanya (all-girls) School, she has returned to the family-run private boarding school that she says "we started in a shed. I thought I must teach the [small] children now again, you know." In her thoughts remain the significance of the dispossessed:

> Even in the town…there are girls, you know, who are intelligent students.… There were some intelligent students, actually, you know, there are two categories. There are girls who can afford.…they don't study, they don't want, their parents, most of the girls who are studying here in the —school, Gurungs most of them, Gurungs or Magars, their father[s] are in

> the British Army, they earn a lot of money. They come to school, they have money, they don't think that they have to study, they just come and pass time, you know. They will eat, drink, and be merry. But there are some students, they really want to study....who can't afford also....Even when I was there [at the Kanya School] I helped. I thought, there was one girl, she was studying in our school....Her father has married another woman and, this girl's mother...was illiterate....So they gave him paper, they gave her paper, and they said "you sign here and put your tongue here and there." And gave her 5000 [rupees] something, something!
>
> And I don't know why, poor girl, she did it....And it was divorce and everything was over with them, husband and wife. And that poor lady, you know, she was sick and all, and she had two daughters, grown up daughters, she used to sell vegetables and all, and she didn't have money and this and that, and poor girls, they were, both of them are very intelligent students. And my sister-in-law and I...we helped [one], you know, sometimes we gave her...dresses and all, and school also helped her, school also helped her and all....And now we have given her a job. So that, because her mother is sick, she can't go and sell vegetables and all, so [this daughter] is studying here, she is doing that. I told her to do morning campus...and the night even she lives here and she teaches sometimes....She has just taken the Class 10 examination. She is happy and her mother is happy, at least, no? (life-history interview, 17 May 1993)

It was through continuing conversations with significant counterparts in the networks and skeins that interconnect at key points in the Nepalese and Canadian community taking place as they have around many "kitchen tables" that I began to establish a fictive kinship and extend that as time and space for developing humane relationships with teachers in Nepal. Learning to read from one's own story and to respond to others' stories to build communities is where I now think education and development should begin. The theories and the way I was taught to replicate them in practice had not extended nor begun from such a value.

I know I have already been a participant-observer in conversations that began from such a value with significant women, my mother, her sister, and their mother. Thus, I have taken up the notion that "the primary human reality is persons in conversations" (Harré, 1984, p. 58). And "in time, each person develops a theory about him or herself" (Howard, 1994, p. vii). Following Martin's and Harré's view,

> conversations are among the most important events in our lives. We can literally talk ourselves into our futures via private conversations (where I explain or think-through issues to myself), conversations with significant others such as family members and friends, and through overarching societal and cultural discussions. (Howard, 1994, pp. vii-viii)

I share a belief with these significant educators which has emerged in a context of our ongoing conversations: "Educative relations" wherein the "reason," which "carries the day," is "not imposition, status or the ability to control resources" (Bullough Jr. & Gitlin, 1991, p. 40). I have sought out other women as teachers to draw out more about the value of connecting threads in the female skein.

I wanted to bring Nepalese women who are and who are becoming teachers into the conversations begun back home in Canada where "sharing and responding to each other's stories" is beginning to create "a new space for teacher education" (Clandinin et al., 1993b, pp. 210-1). It is my alternative to human capital theory.

Modernisation theory

"Modernisation theory" suggests that a society cannot hope to develop until the majority of its population holds modern values (Fägerlind & Saha, 1983); this ties in with views of the proponents of economic growth and "trickle-down" theory (Hindson, 1992). Hindson (1992) asserts that this faith in the rational nature of linear human progress, which will enable change to be accepted, has profoundly influenced educational planning. This is evident in Nepal, as elsewhere. In 1990, "the Washington-based World Bank, which has perhaps more influence over Third World development than any other organization" (Stackhouse, 1995, p. D1),

> was arguing that investments in primary education [are] justified because it leads to improved earnings, increased productivity, especially amongst Asian peasant farmers, declining fertility because of improved health care and better nutrition amongst women; and "modern" attitudes of thought where the curriculum develops "higher order" thinking and questioning. (Watson, 1992, p. 117; see also Lockheed & Verspoor, 1990)

By financing visible structures, such as schools, the World Bank "has long built foundations on which individuals could build better lives. But gradually the Bank has learned" (Stackhouse, 1995, p. D1) that even when these structures are solid, many women and girls did not draw benefit from them. From 1985-1991, half of the World Bank's education projects acknowledged gender issues, and nearly one quarter included actions to encourage female enrollment (Bellew, Raney, & Subbarao, 1992). Current

World Bank-assisted projects in South Asia include ensuring that positive role models are depicted in textbooks and that teacher training includes an awareness of gender issues and reflects the need to enhance the self-image of girls (Bellew, Raney, & Subbarao, 1992; Herz et al., 1991; King & Hill, 1991, 1993). The presence of female teachers encourages girls' enrollment; in rural areas where there is a shortage of female teachers, innovative recruitment and teacher training schemes may be needed (Bellew, Raney, & Subbarao, 1992; see also Basnet, 1991, on Nepal).

Currently, Canada's International Development Research Centre's (IDRC) funded projects (for instance, in Sierra Leone) include the concept of school-community integration as a tool in initial teacher training for grassroots development. Bockarie (1991) reveals that one of the innovative aspects "is the training of teachers who would act as change agents in rural communities" (p. 256). Bockarie's study "points to the use of existing structures in a society for bringing about change and the ineffectiveness of some new structures alien to society's manner of operation" (p. 257).

Vir (1988, p. 3) asks us to consider "when a modernizing process like higher education starts in a traditional society like that of Nepal, which social groups get attracted towards it," and I might add, who gets left behind and whose good work gets left undone.

The irresolute compromise for daughters, whether to be given more education (especially at the post-secondary level) or just adequate education (in Nepal, post-primary level) and then to be pushed into marriage, is a shadow in stories I also encountered in Canada. In Nepal I encountered some parental indecisiveness in Nepalese women teachers' stories regarding their own education, which it is being suggested may "be traced to the same traditionalism" in which their mothers were educated: "Accorded low status (whatever their caste), prohibited from education and Vedic studies, [they] were ascribed roles in the home and the neighbourhood community" (Joshi & Anderson, 1994, p. 170).

Middleton (1993) summarizes the life histories of 12 feminist teachers in New Zealand (of her generation). Like the women in the collective life history, I and the

Nepalese women teachers I encountered identified becoming authors of social change through a childhood and adolescence "characterized by a sense of ambivalence about the process of being brought up to be feminine" (Middleton, 1993, p. 85). A story I was told in Nepal under the title "The Quarrelsome Little Girl," by a newly recruited Home Science specialist in the Ministry of Education and Culture (MOEC) tells much the same: We kept getting into trouble with our parents for not wanting to do what they took to be feminine things, and we were pressured to be inside, not to read all the books we kept trying to bring home to study, but rather to help our mothers. According to this recent recruit who did not wish to be audio-taped, it is for daughters that every political speech in Nepal now seems to include talk about women's equal rights, but also for nothing because these politicians are talking openly about what they do not apply in their own daily lives, for instance, when they go home after their speeches. And, thus, she said there was need for radical change (personal communication, 28 January 1993).

Nepal "virtually closed" its doors a number of times to the story of the diversity of women's experiences, limiting the view of women to the role of servants to males, "as the sex to service males," as the sex responsible for "bearing children and maintaining households" (Joshi & Anderson, 1994, p. 170). As a major consequence of excluding the experiences of women, the one main story told becomes a discipline within which they also get read as if they "held no civil or political positions" (Joshi & Anderson, 1994). The one main story of constraints to progress that modernisation theory is likely to uphold is that "Nepalese society is patriarchal and religious" (Joshi & Anderson, 1994).

Women as teachers once held a relatively high position in Hinduism, and there was a period when women's education prospered. For example, there were two periods, during the Vedic period (1500-800BC) and in the Upanishad period (800-300BC), "where women not only took leading roles in the rituals of sacrifices" but

> when the ancient religious scriptures were composed and studied, there were women scholars [*Gurus*] who engaged in discourse on spiritualism with male scholars, and who became expert in the performance of Vedic rites, grammar, and branches of study which were the means by which the Vedic literature, and hence culture, was transmitted. (Joshi & Anderson, 1994, p. 170; see also King, 1987)

Dependency theory and underdevelopment

The emergence of neo-Marxist "dependency" theory in the late 1960s and early 1970s provided a rationale for criticisms of human capital theory and gave some ideological structure to the arguments for moves away from formal Western education: Underdevelopment is seen as a man-made phenomenon of exploitation of the Third World periphery by the capitalistic nations of the First World; development is not seen as a linear transition from tradition to modernity; and obstacles to development are not traditional cultures but exploitative capitalism (Hindson, 1992; Simkin, 1981). "According to dependency theory, the essence of development is *self-reliance* or *development without dependency*" (Hindson, 1992, p. 159). However, dependency theory itself as a structural framework is seen to present problems, is itself "Western" in character and derivation, is essentially as linear and teleological as modernisation theories, and represents the imposition of a Western intellectual tradition onto the "Third World" (Hindson, 1992).

Comparative research in the 1980s into the role of schooling in the "Third World" has revealed no single reliable and acceptable theoretical framework and, thus, no formula for effective schools that can be reduced to a check-list (Hindson, 1992; Levin, 1992). Kelly (1992a) has concluded after reviewing four decades of debates in the field over methodology, theory, and specific substantive issues that "the field has no [one] center—rather, it is an amalgam of multidisciplinary studies, informed by a number of different theoretical frameworks" (pp. 21-2). Comparative education as a field of study emerged after World War II, and in Kelly's terms, it is a field in search of a distinct identity. Such debate is a strength rather than a weakness in comparative education's "continuous search for an identity" (Arnove, Altbach, & Kelly, 1992, p. 6). But what it has revealed is what might be a source for further investigation as to the ways in which "inculcation in opposing 'worlds' can be a source of development" (Yates, 1992, p. 201).

Through what may be likened to "the improvisation of constant comparison" (Oldfather & West, 1994)—the fundamental qualities of qualitative research—experience and understanding of contradictions or specific (local) tensions have increasingly been incorporated into a framework, unifying structure, or mainstay of comparative education and development. This has been at the heart of contemporary Western understandings of women and girls and those members of traditionally oppressed groups seeking to participate in mainstream education and development (Yates, 1992, see also Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Goetz, 1991; Haig-Brown, 1992; Hindson, 1992; Mitchell, 1977; MOEC/UNESCO, 1990, on the failure of four decades of mainstream educational decision-making in Nepal to tailor education to the needs and aspirations of women and girls, indeed to the masses, due to the resistance of specific local tensions; Strauss & Corbin, 1994).

We now know that a simple increase in the number of educational facilities and greater access to them does not automatically achieve more coming out of the shadows with regard to mothers and daughters: "The educational achievements and cultural capital of a student's mother are often major influences on her or his educational performance and aspirations" (Middleton, 1993, p. 56; for cultural capital theory see Bourdieu, 1971). Since a woman's social mobility was measured only in relation to her father and her husband, "the achievements, influence, and cultural capital of [the] mother" and the actual processes and effects of education were "cast in shadow" (Middleton, 1993, p. 56; see also Delphy, 1981; Eichler, 1980, 1991). Ursula Sharma "likens social science research to shining a torch around a darkened room: as one object is lit up, others are cast in shadow" (White, 1992, p. 3; see Sharma, 1985, p. 45).

While theories and approaches can provide "frames or lenses by which one can analyze and explore a problem or situation" and "they sometimes help to illuminate and provide conceptual lineaments to one's intuition," they may also bracket out the phenomena, according to a number of controlling concepts, which fall outside those particular conceptual frames (Starratt, 1990, p. 83). Constant comparative reflective practice (Schön, 1987) may lead to seeing what is unseen in our individual experience, especially if we allow others "to tell their own stories without imposing academic or social scientific frames" (Greene, in Middleton, 1993, pp. vii-viii) as a goal of enabling a rediscovery of the "roots" of "practically primordial passions" (Casey, 1993, p. 9). This is reciprocal (active, recursive) terrain, for it means that researchers and policymakers must be prepared to risk, to question their own knowledge, to negotiate what counts as knowledge, and, ultimately to change through their learning (Haig-Brown, 1992). Eisenstein (1979) suggested that a continually shifting, uncentered approach can most deeply challenge existing structures. Drawing further on "the kind of insights that so many postmodernists have discussed but so rarely demonstrated," Middleton (1993), in her classes and in her writing, demonstrates "a process of theory making in which the educating feminist makes 'her direct experience the ground of her knowledge'" (pp. 174, 179; Smith, 1974, p. 11).

The "potential tyranny of theory, be it of the modernisation or dependency mode" (Crossley, 1992, p. 184) or any other mode, may potentially subvert the enduring problem in the profession of teaching, that is, a practical and contextually-defined need of teachers to subvert formal schooling's categorizations and paradigms. This has led Schön (1987) and an increasing number of authors to "generative metaphors contained in the stories people tell" (Starratt, 1990, p. 85). It has led me to Bakhtin's theories of the subject: An ordinary teacher "can articulate her own coherence" in a system of intertextuality (language), which may cut across boundaries, yet which does not have to undercut "the dignity of persons" (Casey, 1993; Clark & Holquist, 1984). Such a "signifying repertoire" (Casey, 1993), i.e., common metaphorical terms as a way of seeing the conceptual frame, is "foreshadowed" to be discovered in the "silenced" voices of future and practising women teachers.

By making the actual relational "practices" of people, places, things, and events "visible so that we can locate our inquiry in an everyday world," women teachers may recover not only themselves as subjects in the dominant sociological/ educational conventions/discourse, in terms of development, they may create an understanding of Rorty's (1989) "contingency, irony, and solidarity" (mutual dependence), that is authentic for girls' lives (Smith, in Middleton, 1992a, pp. 20-1).

Following Rorty's (1989) view, Barone (1995, p. 68) suggests that persons in educative relationships sharing vivid depictions of their *modus vivendi* may serve to reduce alienation and this humanistic goal of storytelling suggests for the future,

> The next necessary thing is to enlarge the possibility of intelligible discourse between people quite different from one another in interest, outlook, wealth, and power, and yet contained in a world where, tumbled as they are into endless connection, it is increasingly difficult to get out of each other's way. (Geertz, 1988, p. 147)

Growing doubt about the four horsemen[1]

For the first generation of critical writers, e.g., Bowles and Gintis (1976), the importance of the role of schools in reproducing the social division of labour in the United States is said to have contributed much to our knowledge of the relationship between class and gender specific modes of schooling with social processes in the workplace (Giroux, 1983). However, as a theory of social reproduction, it has been deemed overly simplistic and deterministic: Bowles and Gintis' primary focus on structural regularities (Casey, 1988) points "to a spurious 'constant fit' between schools and the workplace" and ignores "the role of consciousness, ideology, and resistance in the schooling process" (Giroux, 1983, p. 84). As well, teachers were presented "as shadowy puppets, or as diseased parts of a sick system" (Casey, 1988, p. 41). Casey (1988) argues that "the working class orientation of (male) left-wing tradition was" disinclined "to understand the gender dynamics of teaching conditions" (p. 42). That which is mechanistic cannot now account for the recognition of the multiplicity of relations of power that has come from "an expanded influence of postmodern theories" (Apple, 1991).

Casey (1993) states that "the limitations of deterministic *economic* analyses of education and reproductive *cultural* studies of schooling are evident" (p. 157). The significance of the political in terms of gender, that is, "how one should be with children, on the ethics of teaching and evaluation, and on the very control of one's life in and out of schools" (Apple, 1993, p. xiii; 1988), in progressive academic research requires more than just the addition of such concepts as "resistance" and "empowerment" (Casey, 1993; Lather, 1991). Contemporary narratives of women teachers working for social change move us "beyond the simply dispirited and merely reactive" to new standpoints of theory: "These authors actively respond to current conditions, and, simultaneously, revise the progressive problematic" (Casey, 1993, p. 157).

When we begin to include space for daughters to become teachers/authors of social change, it means more than just changing women/girls themselves, it also means changing the structure of the environment to a "literate" one. Such an environment (context) must be one where reading is valued, where there is time and space for women's and girls' significance and their range of movements, and where policymakers' actions are based on a serious intellectual analysis of women's and girls' lives with a profound respect for their authors, what Casey (1993) calls "the most important contribution of Bakhtin's theories."

As Neelam Basnet (1991) sees it in Nepal, "for a large proportion of women, the written word still holds no meaning" (p. 40). This is a revealing change of *locus standi*, one that does not see women and girls as the problem; rather, it attempts to see and to focus on what is problematic through their eyes and, through their forms of expression, to activate potential.

When we begin to build in space and time to "see it feelingly," as Gloucester said in *King Lear* (Shakespeare; see also Oldfield, 1989), we might set modernising theory and practice against the continuity of traditional values. A Harvard-trained economist, former general secretary of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, and director of the

Ottawa-based Jesuit Project on Ethics in Politics, Father William Ryan sent in 1994 by IDRC

> to 30 developing countries to talk to anthropologists, theologians, teachers, nuns, planners—people who might see development as something more than after-tax income.…encountered many people who worry that development means materialism, a thing to be enjoyed at the expense of family unity, social harmony and community responsibility. (Stackhouse, 1995, p. D2)

Modernisation tends to substitute "impersonal relations and formal rules for the traditional values in a country where most everyday activities are accomplished through personal social relationships and custom" (Hossain, 1994, p. 181, on Bangladesh). "Linked tightly to the logic of the market, [such] a route for development…may have particularly negative consequences for women's opportunities" (Measor, 1994, p. 116; see also Shirin M. Rai [1994] on contemporary China). Ironically, "traditional values about the role of women…left virtually unchallenged" may also be "employed as a justification for marginalising women" (Measor, 1994, p. 116; Rai, 1994). Education plays a role "in the production and reproduction of gender divisions," and educational structures "have been developed to shape and figure the swathe of changes [to religious and cultural traditions] resulting from economic development" (Measor, 1994, p. 116; see El-Sanabary, 1994, on Saudi Arabia; Joshi & Anderson, 1994, on Nepal; King & Hill's [1991, 1993] overview of women's education in developing countries; Leach's [1994] review of King & Hill's [1993] World Bank report). And "as governments adopt a more pro-market philosophy this in turn reduces the opportunities for women" (Measor, 1994, p. 116; see also Gordon, 1994, on Zimbabwe; Rai, 1994, on China).

In the realm of women's/girls' educative relationship or social unity, harmony, and community responsibility (and response-ability), recognition of the devaluation of women's educational work has highlighted the severe limitations of categories used principally to show differences between mothers in relation to the work of professionals involved in "futuring" (Greene, 1988):

> Rarely within the sociology of education—focused as it was on reproduction—was education conceptualized as a "process of futuring, of

> releasing persons to become different, of provoking persons to repair lacks and to take action to create themselves." (Middleton, 1993, p. 81; see also Greene, 1988, p. 22)

"And so, partly by default," in Canada, "the relationship of mothers and teachers has been defined as antagonistic" (Gaskell, McLaren, & Novogrodsky, 1989, p. 80). This impedes the understanding that "coalitions of parents and teachers need to join forces in fighting the devaluation of educational work, for it affects both home and school, both mother and [daughter as] teacher" (Gaskell, McLaren, & Novogrodsky, 1989, p. 80). Both mother and teacher have to "work harder with fewer rewards when the state renegs on its obligations": for example, cutbacks in the resources available to schools increase the demands placed on both mothers and teachers (Gaskell, McLaren, & Novogrodsky, 1989).

The irresolute compromise for woman teacher-as-mother in Nepal: "I have to do *all* work and schoolwork also," *Guru-aamaa* says, summing up a day in her life, which begins when the moon is still in the sky, about the same time the day starts for all except one of the women teachers I interviewed (and the exception was 9 months pregnant) and doesn't end until the work is done. *Guru-aamaa*'s telling of her (daily) life is punctuated with ailments. In terms of development as a woman, a mother, a teacher, she has come to expect that it means to be ill and exhausted: "I have a very bad tummy," "dysentery," and juxtaposed with such statements as "but I checked lots uh class tests copy also. I worked!" (life-history interview, 4 May 1993).

This is a serious underestimation of the damage done to people's lives during current structural readjustment policies in the name of efficiency and rationalization of resources. And with that understanding I began to agree that in terms of higher education, "overly deterministic theories of process and change," for instance, "modernisation/development; dependency theory; isomorphism—need to be replaced by a theory that concentrates on the actions and interests of 'real' people operating under particular historical circumstance" (Meek, 1991, p. 156). In conversation, Roshan Chitrakar spoke eloquently about this issue: I asked him "if you could make some kind of change as a teacher-researcher when you go back home to Nepal what would that be?"

> That's where I find a big problem. I don't think as an individual. My friend —talks about that kind of thing. He wants something to happen, he wants change, so what do we do? I respect but I really am very concerned about that kind of feeling. You have to accept the fact that it is not because of one individual that change is going to take place in Nepal. See, that's where the problem is. If I start thinking along that line, you have to be egocentric, they call it, a benevolent leader: You have a very good vision of what should be, hurting many people. Well, that kind of position we have taken. We have been speaking that kind of language for many, many years. And we learned it from others, this is not typical of the Nepalese value system. We are very much a communal people. (personal communication, 8 November 1994)

In developing countries, women as teachers and as advocates of female education have to perform many roles in very trying circumstances. In Nepal, Neelam Basnet had to learn to respect her peers and elders and to stand up to authority as an author in her own right to achieve her calling. For this, she first had to learn patience and commitment, which she did with unwavering resolve and with prayer, and when and how to (make the move as an) author (of) social change: Having written a number of memos, she wrote a very significant one with regard to her personal project of placing at least one woman teacher in every primary school. She would calmly drop this memo on the desk (or sometimes it was waved like a flag in the face) of her male bosses every day for seven years, and although it was a long time in coming and the credit for the change went to the government (male bosses), she was happy to see the content of her memo made mandatory in HMG-N Education Act of 1992 and become actual government policy in early 1993 (life-history interview, 19 February 1993).

In Canada I became an artist as a way to continue to preserve the peasant/artisan line in my own family and I began advocating for further education in the arts, first for myself, and then, for inner city children as I moved into teacher education. I moved into graduate school as I became interested in the system: I recognized other stories had yet to be heard, I became an avid listener. I recognized something similar between my own struggle and that told by other graduate students as we tried to tell our stories into the future.

Given my personal history, I have never felt comfortable with indoctrination, whether in terms of learning or in terms of building New Worlds from Old Worlds if that means shortcuts or conforming to uniformity of view. For me, the world and its history of displacements has been a kind of teacher and unlike those involved in rural enterprise and banking culture, I would never use a word like "stock" to refer to human beings, except as I have done as a rather subtle form of parody or irony: We need different spaces and times in which to take stock of teachers in Nepal. Yet I have listened respectfully and carefully to those who use terms which suggest shortcuts to development and by doing so I found common ground. The ADB official said it would be helpful for female students to have at least some mentors who were also women. He represented this in mythic terms as a timeless and seemingly unresolvable riddle:

> A chicken and egg story, in a sense, you don't have enough female students, therefore, you don't have enough students who are going through the system who can then...become teachers [laugh]....And because you don't have female teachers, therefore, you don't have enough female students. I mean, we recognize that. (personal communication, 4 February 1993)

Yet in that assembly of images in space and time, which of them could speak, determine a course of action, a curriculum, or a direction for education and development? To see such metaphorical explication as belonging to a discourse and discursive practices is not to assume a simple political instrumentality (White, 1992). There were a series of riddles that could be worked on in a certain spirit of generosity which I learned as I encountered teachers in Nepal and elsewhere who work on opposites one at a time in the same spirit (see also Elbow, 1986). Chitrakar makes note of this in his own context as a Newar in Nepal: "We are pretty much a mixed kind of culture, we do Buddhist as well as Hindu rituals" (personal communication, 8 November 1994). In the ADB official's words: "If the country is to develop, you first need higher literacy," but in terms of Nepal,

> I don't mean in the arts or languages. I mean just in terms of the breadth that comes with education. You know being able to accept changes, being able to think for yourself. One of the problems we have, a tremendous problem, about family planning, about agriculture extension is that you're dealing with people for whom the concepts are very alien. And that requires

> the widening of the mind and that is the sort of education I am talking about which comes from being able to read your name and, you know, read the newspaper, if nothing else. (personal communication, 4 February 1993)

I am also one of those people for whom such concepts are very alien. The widening of the mind means more to me than being able to read your name and read the newspaper, it means being able to read the significance of one's own life, and to extend that value, in community, by giving others the space and time to do the same. As Maxine Greene (in Pinar, 1975) has written: "*And [we] don't want to die before [we] read at least a tenth of what [we] want to read, before [we] learn something, before [we] really can say [we] understand what teaching is*" (p. 298).

If this is a value, it is not a value in the human capital line, which goes only so far: The dominance of this theoretical standpoint and its vocabulary is ingrained in the Nepalese bureaucratic community who intersect at key points with the expatriate foreign aid community.

A new recruit in the Office of the Women's Education Project (OWEP), MOEC, recognized in herself a great desire that females in many parts of Nepal have to become teachers (personal communication, 28 January 1993). But she kept returning to the factors that prevented them from answering with their lives, or as she put it, "to be able to read their names and to read the newspaper." This may have been due to the constraints to significance her own story was now positioned within, and a recurring theme in the government line: "We cannot find girls" (personal communication, 28 January 1993).

As Zachariah (1985) writes:

> Despite inadequate resources, dedicated teachers nevertheless will find and nurture the latent promise of a few students from peasant and worker backgrounds who will justify the hopes of their parents and demonstrate, through their exceptional achievements, the potential of formal education to facilitate at least a measure of personal liberation. (p. 20)

We work within traditions of metaphorical explication, "many educational systems are linked to existing, unjust political economies through many visible and invisible connections" (Zachariah, 1985, p. 20). The traditions of theories we are working in are not absolutely devoid of goals or purposes. They build in the perception that I must extract or subtract something from what I might be told, with no clear understanding of why that might give women and girls' little new knowledge and confidence in expressing themselves.

In Nepal, Neelam Basnet has had to negotiate with those holding privileged desk-bound positions who ignore programs that have helped to increase the numbers of women teachers and the numbers of girls in primary schools, projects that these officials have been involved in for more than 20 years. Foreign aid programs and projects in which "it is not very easy…to see" or hear about "the result" from women and girls. Neelam Basnet said, "If we have to construct 20 *laakhs* [a *laakh* = one hundred thousand] building, we invest and then we…can see the building." Pye-Smith (1988) suggests in Nepal, and I know this is not exclusive to Nepal,

> institutions involved in aid are keen on self-preservation. To survive they need problems, and to be credible they must be able to define the problems, to dress them up in facts and figures, and thus convince their pay-masters that they have a role to play in putting right whatever is wrong. "What you must remember," said one expatriate aid worker, "is that aid agencies and the big lending banks are not interested in doing small things, even when it is only small things which need to be done. What they like to fund are big schemes.…They like these things because they cost a lot of money, they require a large and expensive expatriate input and they are highly visible." (p. 166)

Higher education, according to Jones (1991), "has always been notably trans-cultural"; while "academics are the most frequent and efficient carriers of models of higher education.… Models are often transported by the many practices described…as foreign aid. Advisers, funds, text-books, laboratories and whole buildings are often despatched under this rubric" (pp. 9-14).

In Nepal, an advocate of female education notices how many girls and boys, women and men, walk in or out of the rooms of those buildings. Neelam Basnet has listened carefully, respectfully to many students and teachers who express in their terms, in her numerous travels into the field, what happens to them when they get back home. This new thinking has been elusive. My understanding of this new thinking and practice had "been enriched by the published writings, manuscripts, public talks, and [private] conversations with numerous feminist," maternal, women in resistance, and/or women as artists, as teachers, that is, "inquirers now identifying and reevaluating women's different voices" (Ruddick, 1989/1990, pp. 63, 261-2f). For example, Nancy Goldberger, of the *Women's Ways of Knowing* collective (Belenky et al., 1986), "coined the phrase 'different-voice' theory, using Carol Gilligan's expression to designate those feminists who look to women's work and experiences to articulate alternative ideals of epistemology and moral reasoning" (Ruddick, 1989/1990, p. 261-2f; see also Benhabib, 1992; Britzman, 1991; Gilligan, 1982, 1986, 1987; Martin, 1985; Noddings, 1984). This list is an offering of a place where I began a "careful, respectful" conversation with versions of different-voice theory and recognized the contribution being made by the growing female advocacy work in revisioning New Worlds out of Old Worlds (e.g., literary history and aesthetics) (Oldfield, 1989; Ruddick, 1989/1990).

On Canadian radio, I heard an interviewer's response to Gilligan's call: The female voice is "a different voice," that is, "female and original" (Powell, 1991, p. 13). I heard Gilligan defend herself from the critics' views that "difference voice theory" is essentialist, is incompatible with postmodernism(s)' insights: Gilligan responded, "I'm always uncomfortable with simplistic descriptions....that doesn't fit with my experience. That kind of labelling of people seems to me very destructive, no matter who's being labelled" (in Powell, 1991, p. 15). I take it that people need to be heard, allowed to speak again, to be heard again, and so forth, and must not be reduced to icons or labels, which can then be deleted or dismissed. If what is female and original can be heard in the notion of a different voice, as Bakhtin's (1981) overarching theories and those on the level of specificity would also suggest, then I take it too that "the independent artist and intellectual are among the few remaining personalities equipped to resist and to fight the stereotyping and consequent death of genuinely living things" (Mills, 1963, p. 299).

What can be heard in the "different voices" associated with women/girls and in the kinds of questions we are led to ask and in the kinds of answers and consequences we are prepared to hear/to believe? As the women of Nepal and elsewhere can attest, the financing of structures, such as schools, have built foundations on which individuals could ostensibly build better lives, but these foundations, in terms of drawing connecting lines between women and girls, are not very solid. The current administrative outlook has not changed much, according to Neelam Basnet (1991), "regarding the development of female education," in that significantly—"If we turn the pages of the history of education in Nepal, we find that [while] the development of education has stretched over several hundred years," except for the building of a separate primary school and an all-girls secondary school, respectively in 1924 and 1947—"nothing was specially mentioned" (pp. 1-3).

Prior to the 1950s' early institutionalization of formal education in Nepal, and a notion which perhaps continues into the future, most Nepalese women were considered to be illiterate (Thapa, 1985). Those who "were more active among the women, who were playing [an] active political role…were called *Utpat* and *Bitpat* (trouble creators)" (Thapa, 1985, p. 25). According to Thapa (1985), it was "only when institutionalized education for girls was developed" that "the consciousness among the Nepalese women, in [a] real sense, picked up momentum" (p. 89). A professor of psychology in a Nepalese women's college, observing this momentum,

> says that women are having difficulty coming to "a point of compromise" between the values prescribed by traditional society and the demands of being "modern," the definition of which eludes them. "On the one hand, there is society's stereotyping of the 'pure woman,' and on the other, they are being asked to cope with too many changes, too soon." Unable to discuss matters with family or with friends, many young women are liable to take drastic action when confronted with a situation that is hard to cope with. (Aryal, 1991, p. 12)

"The impact of changing mores and new demands," especially "upon young city women" (Aryal, 1991) in Nepal, is a momentum I also recognized in Canada, but as a theoretical journey it is yet to be explored in the dominant discourse(s). I was raised in a city in Canada, by family displaced from farms and rural villages, whether that be in the

Old World of Germany and Romania or the New World of sugar beet fields of southern Alberta. And I, too, have experienced the difficulty of coming to a point of compromise and the difficulty of discussing education and development with family members with little or no formal education and with educated members of society. Thus, I had set out like so many before previously "engaged in a lively feminist inquiry into women's experiences and expressions....to redefine and revalue 'femininity,'" in the realms of daughter and mother, and in the realms of intellectual and peasant/artisan, "asking whether certain themes recur in the stories that very different women tell of their lives and, if so, what their social, political, and psychological determinants are" (Ruddick, 1989/1990, p. 63).

With such an approach in mind, I actually ended up just dropping those theories—human capital, modernisation, dependency and underdevelopment—for a time, not as a divorce, but just as a mutually agreed upon separation from their ways to frame this new story. Instead, I began to have growing pains (a new metaphor). Nepal has never been colonised in legalistic terms and the idea of foreign assistance is still a relatively new one (Bista, 1991). Said (1994) argues that the purpose of the intellectual's activity to advance human freedom and knowledge remains the same; what remains for the independent peasant/artisan and the intellectual is

> a truly vast array of opportunities....For in fact governments still manifestly oppress people, grave miscarriages of justice still occur, the co-optation and inclusion of intellectuals by power can still effectively quieten their voices, and the deviation of intellectuals from their vocation is still very often the case. (pp. 17-8)

Giving birth to new identity

In Nepal, as in Bangladesh (see White, 1992), the notion of "one's own people" (*apon lok*, in Bangladesh, *afan ta*, in Nepal) is extremely powerful. The experience of my theoretical journey, in terms of having had a chance to come to know the Nepalese community at the University of Alberta, and in Nepal, and a strong community of Canadian advocates of female education, raised in me a growing sense of this, of finding "one's own people" in the network of friendship and community who have helped along the way. Having come from peasant/artisan and worker stock of displaced German-Romanians to be a teacher-researcher in Canada accompanied by many and various dedicated teachers, I began to think again about all the stories people have shared with me about giving birth to new identity.

In Nepal I met Neelam Basnet, a woman powerful in the sense of "strong character," who has worked as an advocate of female education all her life. In conversation with her, I began to feel that here was a true pedagogue, another who saw me as one of her own, a kindred daughter in education and development. She saw something in me, and seeing something for me in the work she had begun, sparked possibilities and pulled on what I took to be loose threads, but which have shaped the person I am now becoming.

I needed a kind of practice or epiphany in a site of practice, making it possible to release other selves and to stitch them together. In Nepal, I realized that I too had a story of coming to be a teacher, and a teacher-researcher. In Canada I thought the main point of my own story was that I had always been an advocate of my own education, and this doctoral research project was one indicator of how far I could progress. Neelam Basnet had her own story and she carried the threads: The stories of women being and becoming teachers in Nepal which she had listened to for many years. Her story told me that she is an advocate of female education, and while it was almost the same, it was not quite the same as being an advocate of one's own education. I came to International/Intercultural Education as a professional actress and journalist, as a published writer of short stories, dramatic monologues, choral pieces, and plays, and as a teacher of Drama and English. The theories had threatened to rewrite my own story in a form and style akin to what I had read in the dominant discourse(s). What I had almost lost along the way was the understanding I had brought with me about my own story and about the stories my mother and grandmother had passed on though me, about drama, about tragedy, about engaging in acts of "futuring" to see all our stories through to the end. Having listened to her, story this, her stories became a significant turning point for me.

We can find girls who want to be teachers in the strangest disguises

In Nepal, the problems are neither "so simple as it is often made out to be by different professionals," nor are they beyond comprehension as some writers also make them out to be, for Neelam Basnet "has sought to present the whole case of women in a comprehensive manner" (Singh, 1991). As a woman recognized as a teacher and author of social change for many women and girls in Nepal, who cuts a very "dashing" figure (a name given to female advocates, in popular terms in Nepal), she has also spoken to me about being a mother and the relationship between her work in the outside world and the relationship between herself and a daughter in the private world. Her aim to reach out to "activize" female potential came early:

> My kids are saying, "You are as a father, though you are our mother"....Yeah, they told me like that, especially my daughter....My mother, uh when I was uh 10/12 years, she expired....And then, at that time, that was my, my feeling when I will learn something...I will do something. I must do something for our women....I thought, I, I will not be a, simply a housewife, I have to do some things. (Neelam Basnet, life-history interview, 19 February 1993)

Neelam Basnet remembers that her illiterate father, not unlike other government officials at that time, was educated by his parents: "What they are saying, what they are telling. That way, that was our, you know, traditional way to learn" (life-history interview, 19 February 1993). She comes from a "very well-to-do family," "very conscious," meaning perhaps aware and/or a slip for conscientiousness, land-owning family ("we have a big farm. And we have lots of land and things"), told me very clearly about the progressive problematic to which Nepalese women who are (and who are becoming) teachers may individually take on to shape the culture of teaching. She took the role of a female advocate not for her own livelihood, and not for her own children, and within that orientation she designed and implemented all her upgrading programs, especially to help the female peasants and artisans, who were seen as sources of the food and other goods that ultimately support the class or caste structure, to become teachers in their respective villages:

> If she has passed…third grade or 4th grade, we will pick up…and we'll bring them in the hostel and we educate 3, 4 years, okay? Um, it was actually not enough…for how much we need because our planning was each year, 300, 400 girls, we, every year we have to train for primary school…otherwise the female teacher force will be very, very low, very few. But it was *very* difficult to find that much girls and another one program we designed. Okay, now, any girls who are studying in these schools they will get scholarship but on the basis of certain criteria, she should be uh socially and economically deprived community.…And especially who are very poor, and very backward community, because, you know, in Nepal, there are so many caste, and so many groups, and they, you know, they feel "oh, I am superior and they are inferior and uh they should not touch me," and like this, uh that things. So I want to.…Yeah, though…illegal…[and] now in our constitution there is no…discrimination, but…still in practice there is. And so I want to promote *that* community who are socially and economically, they are very deprived. There are people in this society they thinks they are very inferior, they are very low, they have to serve us, we are the master…we are the kings, that things. So I, especially I designed that scholarship for those community, especially those who makes shoe, who makes clothes…who makes…that community. (Neelam Basnet, life-history interview, 19 February 1993)

"The politically progressive educator can 'never forget to remain in contact' with those in subordinate social positions, for it is here that she finds the sources of the problems she 'sets out to study and resolve'" (Casey, 1993, p. 161; Gramsci, 1971/1980, p. 330). In Nepal, "some 96 percent of economically active women are engaged in agriculture," and since "the everyday tasks of family life in rural areas…involve women in intensive labour farm work and time-consuming domestic chores to provide fuel, water and food for their children and other household members," there is "little time…left for activities with potentially higher economic returns, or to contribute to the economic and social development of the country" (Basnet, 1991, pp. 30-1). Neelam Basnet, even in retirement, gives in to her scholarly passion to build, think, and feel at home in the nation she is working to restructure educationally, "because I can't live without…and so I'm in, I can't keep my quiet" (life-history interview, 19 February 1993).

I can't keep my quiet either: This is the way my parents and grandparents spoke English and it sounds like home to me. My problematic in Canada as the first-born daughter of displaced German-Romanians has been a kind of literary and dramatic work: The labor or practice I have engaged in throughout my life to bring together somewhat loosely held, internally complex and contradictory, elements of my identity to an audience forms a distinctive kind of narrative, an almost operatic, theatrical consciousness. As a professional actress I had "stage presence," and I seem always to be looking out for others who have the potential to play strong characters. "Politically, it means articulating points of intersection, and discovering common ground" (Casey, 1993 p. 24; see also Casey, 1988; Elbow, 1986; Kliebard, 1975).

I rediscovered as Casey (1993) herself did that one's own experiences may well provide impetus for this theoretical journey and others, "in a more than reciprocal return…the study of the life histories of other teachers" (p. 9) is an opportunity to reflect upon teaching, my own included, and to explore the social grounding of ideas, my own included.

Guru-heart who was educated following the migrations of her Gurkha father both inside and outside Nepal, in practicing what she is reading in the works of Gandhi (an ideal of non-violent movement taught to him by mothers) to her female students says,

> Sometimes, yes, when we try to do some [new things] people who get jealous here, they can't do anything, and when we try to…they don't want to see us doing this. This is what happens in Nepal. Not only in this school, it happens, in every place it happens. And I think that is why…in our country, we cannot develop, because it's always like that.…They don't themselves want to do it, so nobody must do it. (life-history interview, 11 May 1993)

Since the rite of passage to teaching and speaking out "incorporates a multiplicity of positions and levels" for daughters becoming teachers, their "structural position" across such complex terrain "can be highly fluid" (Meek, 1991, p. 156). When I asked the mountain village Gurung teacher, keeping to the forefront all that she had told me about 23 years of service in being not only a woman teacher but an advocate of female education in her village, "If you could have been born again would you be born a boy or a girl?" she replied:

> *Gurung teacher:* [Laughs] I want to be a girl [laughing, speaking in English].
>
> *American Peace Corps female volunteer and translator:* She'd be a woman.
>
> *Linda:* [Laughs] Why?....[Laughs] its so *hard* obviously.
>
> *Gurung teacher:* No. It's my thinking. I want to be *chhorimanche* (girl-man) than *chhoramanche* (boy-man) because of my own [experience]. (translation, life-history interview, 28 May 1993)[2]

Both stories highlight the negotiability of the female domain, a domain defined by Casey (1993, p. 65) as "the meaning generated by the world-within flows into the world-without, breaching the boundaries constructed by the state," and by Middleton (1993, p. 103) as "blurred boundaries; intersections; fluidities—ebbs and flows in time and space," that which suffers and survives "harsh interruptions," and, as my grandmother and mother advised me, such harsh interruptions which don't kill you make you strong.

Silence about the reasons

Since increasingly we are concerned with renaming what it is that teachers are (Casey, 1988, 1990, 1993; Weiler, 1988), what is education and development (Zachariah, 1985), and what these terms mean comparatively to women and girls (Kelly, 1992a, 1992b), my study is a question centered and uncentered around women being and becoming teachers in Nepal and, for me, in Canada. Kelly and Kelly's (1989) bibliography on women's education in the Third World[3] reveals that despite the fact that teaching professions world-wide have become increasingly female the literature is silent on how (and why) women enter teaching. Little is known about how, why, where, and when women and girls learn to speak out and act on what remains silent: for instance, the telling image of their mothers, implicit theories about why and how, as daughters, they have come to be teachers, and what they see and take on as their own purpose in education and development.

We need to begin with what we believe

Film-maker and chief of the Communications Section of UNICEF/Nepal, Rina Gill (1991), suggests that for those policymakers and development practitioners who wish to work as advocates of female education "perhaps the first step should be for [all] of us to critically examine our own attitudes towards girls and women. We would make rather poor advocates if we do not truly believe in the cause we promote" (p. 8). And like this UNICEF spokesperson in Nepal, I believe that

> it is time that the woman started being considered important, as an individual who mattered in her own right. It is time for us to stop treating her as a passive recipient of services, and to go the extra mile to ensure that she becomes an active determinant of her own future: a person who demands good health, nutrition, education, and above all, equal status, not as a privilege but as a birthright. (Gill, 1991, p. 8)

"On the road," then, "to the kind of critical thinking sought by the best thinkers...to stand within and without the cultures that trained them" (Kagan, 1994, p. 4) is a lesson in the offering, and for those whose lives take such turns, there are no shortcuts to development.

We must recognize plurality of stories

Britzman (1991, p. 16) defines a *problematic* as "our capacity to produce contradictory meanings to determine the problematic nature of education and the language we use to describe our experience there." Further, the plurality of social situations creates sights and sounds "not understood in general, singular or unitary sense," rather "in terms of diversity and changeability" (Casey, 1993, pp. 20-1). "Our aim should be the full expression and reconciliation of [different] voices" (Brody et al., 1991, p. 265; Ellsworth, 1989; Noddings, 1984, p. 6), not only "of the Female from the Male Other, but between women and within women" (De Lauretis, 1988, pp. 14-5; White, 1992, p. 162).

In a doctoral seminar, I advanced Neelam Basnet's (1991) argument about women being and becoming teachers in Nepal: "The low status of teachers and girls in our society has become the...stumbling block in promoting girls' education and in involving girls in the teaching profession" (p. 116). A Brahmin Nepalese colleague and doctoral candidate in Canada called this into question for it was her original belief grounded in an understanding of her own position in caste hierarchy in Nepal that for a woman to become a teacher in Nepal is to enter another not insignificant site whereby she may extend her practice to achieve social status. Her questioning of the "low status of teachers and girls" in Nepalese society, brought to mind the words of women teachers I had encountered in Nepal. I remembered to pull on threads: This Gurung mountain village teacher, who was very definite about the difficulties and discouragement for a woman teacher with respect to what her village (and birthplace) thought of her return, that is, a daughter being and becoming one of their teachers:

> Some people think it's okay. Somebody thinks "she could get no other job and became teacher." It's different from people to people. Some people feel...teaching profession is pure, no bribe, nothing. But some people think "it is worthless job. Those who do not get job outside came [back] in village and become teacher, eat government money." People say so. But they are few. Not more. (translation, life-history interview, 28 May 1993)

A daughter may be seen to have joined the company of those who serve only to "eat government money" (a popular term in Nepal). If so she is no longer entitled to the kind of self-perceived or self-directed help or support she requires to fulfil her aims. What underlies her vulnerability is not necessarily only material resources, nor is it necessarily an employment relationship, but rather the lack of adequate sources of human support, which law, government/foreign aid, and custom makes necessary to her.

In a later conversation, after her return from Nepal, my colleague told me about having had an opportunity to ask Neelam Basnet what she had meant by applying the term "low status" to women as teachers. Neelam Basnet's response was telling: She informed my Nepalese colleague that what she meant by "low status" was that to be a woman and a teacher in Nepal is *also* to enter a site of vulnerability (personal communication, 7 January 1995). I felt that I had in some small measure begun another round of conversations, and that all my efforts in Nepal to understand what women teachers were telling me had not been in vain, there was no right or wrong, just more space to be made to understand sites of dissonance in sign in the story of woman as teacher in Nepal in terms of diversity and changeability. According to Bakhtin, "this stratification and diversity of speech will spread wider and penetrate to even deeper levels as long as language is alive and still in the process of becoming" (in Holquist, 1981, p. xix). I also recognized the power of other structures to shape understanding.

While discrimination on the basis of caste has been illegal in Nepal since 1963 (Bista, 1991), and the value ascribed to women may be different in the 40 to 75 ethnic groups and perhaps even 100 different ethnic groups and castes estimated to exist in Nepal, the Brahmin-Chhetri values, which assume caste, have been assumed to permeate Nepalese society and are idealized in a book on Nepalese women by a female Nepalese scholar (Majupuria, 1989). Underlying the caste system, an occupational classification system (Apte, 1990; Justice, 1986; Watkins & Regmi, 1990), is an "ascription of qualities of graduated social pollution, with the most polluted becoming pariahs" (Bista, 1991, p. 36).

Is that important, in terms of getting teachers' stories in some kind of published form? I asked Roshan Chitrakar in view of his return to Nepal:

> Yes…in booklet form, to distribute among other teachers [it] may encourage other teachers to speak out. That will become a kind of language. We have not really encouraged that kind of language or literature to grow. We have to be very, very patient. I have a sense that that kind of language is not being regarded in our community, as we understand it, being sensitive to people, and allowing others to speak. (personal communication, 8 November 1994)

Sites of dissonance in sign

A major objective of HMG-N in its commitment to the universalization of primary education by the year 2000, reflected in the Basic Needs Programme of the education sector, is to increase women and girls' participation in the educational activities of Nepal (MOEC, 1987; MOEC/UNESCO, 1990; Rajbhandari, 1990; World Bank/UNDP, 1991). These efforts are said to have intensified since 1990, the International Literacy Year and South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Year of the girl child[4] (MOEC/UNESCO, 1990, p. 34).

A significant concern, however, is being raised with the Equal Access of Women to Education Programme (EAWEP) as the project was first called in 1971 [the name changed to Education of Girls and Women in Nepal (EGWN) in 1983] when it was launched by HMG-N, with the assistance of UNICEF/UNESCO, giving priority to the training of women teachers. It was first introduced in the Gandaki Zone and then expanded as a possible response in view of the very low rates of female literacy, girls' enrollment in primary school, and participation of women in the teaching profession. From the beginning, UNICEF were partners with UNESCO (who started EAWEP in 1969/1970 by providing technical support through NORAD, i.e., constructing hostels for girls). However, UNESCO eventually withdrew, leaving UNICEF, from 1971, 100% responsible to pay for the training of women and girls to become primary teachers under this project: beds, pots, pans, stipends for textbooks, medical allowances, clothing allowances, and so forth.

Of plotlines, pots and pans

The now former expatriate senior officer of the Education Section of UNICEF in Kathmandu made it clear that UNICEF/UNESCO was very disappointed in EGWN. For instance, while UNICEF had supplied virtually everything (or in her terms "pots and pans") for more than two decades, no infrastructure had evolved to support or integrate this expensive type of compensatory education for girls and women from remote and disadvantaged areas in Nepal into an accredited teacher training system (personal communication, 17 January 1993; *Educating Girls and Women*, 1989).[5]

Sixty-eight percent of the women teachers trained under the EGWN (1972-1984) were employed. In 1984, thirty-sex percent of the total numbers of female teachers (1,091 out of 3,002) working in primary schools were EGWN graduates, with the highest number (73%) working in the remote districts and the lowest in the Terai districts (53%). While the EGWN teachers made up about 63% of the total female teachers in remote districts, the SLC requirement [School Leaving Certificate after ten full-time years of schooling] will negate this contribution. The EGWN trained B-level teachers without SLC have been dismissed from their jobs, only sixty-one percent of teachers trained under the EGWN up to 1987 are working in primary schools. "If the policy of replacing all under SLC teachers is pursued further, the B-level teachers are in danger of being an extinct species in as much as most of these teachers do not hold school leaving certificates": hence, the story told in numbers is that the overall impact of the EGWN project, on a national scale, has been "insignificant" (*Education of Girls and Women*, 1989, pp. 2-9). On the other hand, the CERID (1986) evaluation study concluded, that

> Nepal is one of the few countries in the world that has established an administrative set-up and a network of feeder hostels and training centres specifically designed for the promotion of girls' education in the country through the preparation of female teachers. It would be unwise on our part not to fully utilize these infrastructures. (in *Educating Girls and Women, 1989*, p. 9)

In Nepal, when I spoke with a recently appointed senior official at the Basic and Primary Education Project (BPEP/MOEC), he said that he had never even heard of EGWN (personal communication, 31 January 1993). Neelam Basnet was not surprised: "You can imagine…their attitude towards female education.…But, I will say, this [EGWN] project has a very *good* impact in the *whole Nepal*" (life-history interview, 19 February 1993).

Neelam Basnet adds that "almost all the available funding for women's development programmes has come from foreign aid," which "suggests that there has been a low level of commitment and interest on the part of the government to improve the situation for women" (1991, p. 19). And "despite the proliferation of women's interest groups and women['s] development sections in government bodies, women's participation in the [educational,] political and economic life [of Nepal] still falls short of the [sight-lines of the] government's broad policy statements" (Basnet, 1991, p. 23).

But the part that "field and kitchen equipment" played when women were out in the streets of Nepal in 1990 in protest is said to have come as a significant stimulus to the pro-democracy and human rights movement at a moment it had begun to falter in view of the continued suppression by the government (Chitrakar, 1992). Women are a key part of social resources. When "a local team of friends, neighbours, and female kin" who assist each other in their obligations and "not without conflict at times" (Sharma, 1980, p. 193, on women in North West India) are out on the streets protesting side-by-side with pots, pans, kitchen and field implements, together these are a powerful sign of dissonance read by the populace. "The protest procession by the women in Patan" in Nepal—a city that long ago was once the home of a separate kingdom leads across a bridge into Kathmandu—"rejuvenated the pro-democracy demonstrators and the movement picked up steadily" (Chitrakar, 1992, pp. 100-1).

What are the signs and sites of dissonance in sign that move us? The ways, words, and means we rely on to move us, sweep in and sweep out in building New Worlds from Old Worlds seems especially relevant. Put back together as a composition of value, our conversations and reflections on stories of lived-events make spaces for those coming after to obtain support, to learn to function in a world with surprisingly harsh contradictions and interruptions in values. I know this is the story my theoretical journey in field notes, in life-histories, in interviews and conversations with women teachers and advocates of female education tells: To build spaces that make life and work as teachers possible. The power of strong female characters' accounts is such "that previous assumptions are challenged, and existing definitions of problems must be expanded, or even abandoned" (Casey, 1988, p. 50). In private and more and more in public, Neelam Basnet along with women who are and who are becoming teachers and other advocates of female education in Nepal have related that yes there are risks involved and sacrifices in putting it altogether, in getting it right.

Over this range, groups/individuals wage a kind of battle for control. In the short-term, those who are involved in management of such a resource/network could gain access to economic, social, and political recognition. "There is, therefore, total consensus on the need for specific interventions to redress the present situation" of girls' and women's education (*Education of Girls and Women*, 1989, pp. 20-1). Yet, both UNICEF and the government were unable to make the education of girls/women in Nepal a sustainable project. According to this ADB senior official, "that's as I have said is a problem for [our] program, really, for everything" (personal communication, 4 February 1993).

Building and thinking in connecting lines

Advocates of female education are made, not born. How they are made often depends on that first moment of significant contact with the art of advocacy itself. Meeting Neelam Basnet and hearing her speak about her life as an advocate of female education in Nepal set a direction for my life and I suppose that ability, really, to elevate and inspire in a lasting way is what art is all about. Neelam Basnet offered me a personal, wise summing up of the gains and losses of an advocate's life, as well as an insider's account of the key political conflicts and strategies within the MOEC, and the OWEP. Passing along her words to me continues a lifelong commitment by other means to educate all within earshot of the aims and moral rightness of the struggle for women and girls to participate in the educational activities of Nepal, to end discrimination, to foster every girl's birthright, to establish sustainable forms of development. Her own account of the process by which these aims were to be achieved reveals the qualities which made her a natural, acclaimed advocate throughout that process: anger at injustice, listening skills, sensitivity to a shifting political climate in enemy ranks, a readiness to sacrifice privilege and health in the pursuit of wider goals. The answer was her life.

It was only when her mother died that she began to learn that her further education as a girl and girlhood freedom in the village was an illusion. She began to hunger for it and not to turn a deaf ear but to pray with the parents of her female friends to send their daughters along with her to school. As a student, and a daughter of a landowning family, she gained the transitory freedom of being able to study for herself. She turned on her family's desire for her to become a doctor, to make it possible to go where she chose and to read what she pleased, not telling them at first that she had changed her mind and wanted to work in education, particularly, with rural villagers to make it possible for them to send their daughters to schools. She single-handedly opened 1800 schools and for that she received recognition from HMG-N, but what she yearned for was that most basic and honorable of freedoms of achieving and honoring female potential, of earning her keep, of marrying and having a family—the freedom not to be obstructed in a lawful life. And then she saw to it that it was not just her own freedom that might have been curtailed, but the freedom of other daughters of Nepal to reach their own and to activate others' potential.

The challenge to activate this potential: The final frontier

Since 1954, when "systematic educational development in Nepal began," and particularly 1971, when "the Government introduced the National Education System Plan which aimed at countering the elitist basis of the then existing education system by orienting education to support productive enterprises and egalitarian principles," and, moreover, in 1990, when "fundamental political changes took place" (ADB, 1991, p. 2), the institutions in which women and girls study and teach, have been subjected to restructuring. Middleton (1993) points out that the maintenance or introduction of provisions for equal opportunities and affirmative action within new structures is of great concern to advocates of female education who have generated critiques of restructuring policies in various countries and cites works by feminist writers, almost all of whose writings I have been able to get hold of and whom I feel it is important not to forget and to read, i.e., Australia (Yates, 1990, 1991), Britain (Arnot, 1991; Deem, 1989), Canada (Gaskell, McLaren, & Novogrodsky, 1989), New Zealand (Jones, 1990; May, 1990; McDonald, 1992; Middleton, 1990, 1992b). The writings of Basnet (1991) argue similarly in the case of Nepal.

The structure of assumptions deeply rooted in the terms *maiti* (maternal home) and *arkhako ghar* (another's house) in Nepal has not changed. My understanding about the significance of *maiti* has grown from numerous conversations with Roshan and Kalpana Chitrakar, Newar friends and a husband and wife team who bring to mind a family of doctoral colleagues, who have spoken about the maternal home as a place where daughters *may* be more outspoken, less docile, and free. Upon marriage, the daughter is widely recognized in Nepal to symbolically and literally leave *maiti* and travel to another's house, not her own place, but another's, that is, to the home of her husband and mother-in-law (*arkhako ghar*), wherein she may lose whatever sense of power she might have gained in her mother's home.

Physically displaced from the maternal home, *maiti*, and a community where she felt safe, and now living and working in a school situated in a village near a road, this unmarried Newar beginning teacher far from the site of care and connectedness of her kin, reveals the necessity of the instruction of younger women by older women, which is usually kept private (Estés, 1992). That most nurturant instruction in her narrative to become a teacher, what Naomi Lowinsky calls the "Motherline" (Edelman, 1994), ends in preparation for the SLC. Her own mother had studied for the School Leaving Certificate but on the birth of her and her brother, the twins, had to stop and forgot too much to go back:

> [My father] used to run factories also and it is very difficult to get uh people who are good people, good labour, so there are many, he did many businesses, but he, he, he is not satisfied with this work [quiet laugh/outtake of air], so he wanted to be a teacher. Also, um, I found also, that teaching profession is good in our country.…women working in other offices say that they have to work under boss [quiet laugh/outtake of air].…Yeah…its very difficult.…And also one, one of my se—, uh, senior lady, uh, lady who is senior to me in university, she also encouraged, she also liked this teaching profession.…Yeah, she also used to say that teaching profession is very good. You don't have to work under any other boss [laugh]. You will, you will do your work in your own, so.…[my mother] encouraged only when I was studying.…I told you the other day that she studied up to, yeah, she was preparing for her School Leaving Certificate.…Yeah, but [that's] when we, we were born together, my brother and I.…
>
> So, she couldn't remember anything.…Um, when I stay alone, it is difficult to, I feel that it is very difficult for Nepalese ladies to be…single.[6] (life-history interview, 19 May 1993)

In Bangladesh, and as *Guru-aamaa* and other teachers tell us in Nepal, "strong structural discouragements to female independence…foster women's concentration on their networks and relationships for social capital, and these come to represent the crucial locus of female power" and "a site of vulnerability" (White, 1992, pp. 91, 93). To bring such an audience who are ostensibly outside the perimeters of the reach of formal schooling inside, is a manipulation of terms, "a central part of the negotiation of gender identities" (White, 1992, p. 71). Evident to White (1992) in Bangladesh, as it became evident to me in Nepal, the notions of "outside" (*bahire*, in Bangladesh; *baahiraa*, in Nepal) and "inside" (*bhitore*, in Bangladesh; *bhitra*, in Nepal) "are figurative, not simply literal terms; their content is not set, but variable" (p. 71). To bring together such an audience who are ostensibly outside the perimeters for taking lead roles in theoretical service is a challenge: A recurring theme in Nepalese political service is popular power versus status quo (Raeper & Hoftun, 1992).

Gailey (1987b) explains that "kinship indicates a social relationship—fictive, blood, or both" (p. x). In Bangladesh, as in Nepal,

> kinship is the idiom for a wide range of relationships. Thus employers may be called *Caca* or *Kaka* (uncle, [in] Muslim and Hindu [communities] respectively); schoolmistresses *Apa* or *Didi* (sister, Muslim and Hindu) or a senior male colleague *Dada* (elder brother). Also, people "adopt" one another formally as fictive kin and this is taken very seriously, sometimes meaning more dependable ties than blood relationships (Nath, [1986] p. 123). In such circumstances, the lines between "friendship" and "kinship" are far from clear.
>
> Women's relationships—whether construed as "friendships" or "kin-relations"—are often presented in caricature: women are either "sisters" or locked in jealous combat. (White, 1992, p. 90)

In the formation of teacher and authoritative identity, we may see similar displacement(s) of the daughter from the Motherline. Gailey (1987b) explains that "in the defense of kin communities against the extractions and exactions of the emerging dominant class, kinship relations," perhaps, especially, those in the female domain, can "become strained and can become oppressive" (p. 21; see also Gailey, 1985).

Neelam Basnet also recognizes such significant and sometimes oppressive educative relations in Nepal:

> Father is uh easy to convince them. But mother, and what they will tell me…you know, "oh I am uneducated, I am illiterate and I can manage, I give birth, and I care my child, and I am a housewife, why should I have to send my daughter to school, no, no, no, you people, my daughter, she will be, uh, you know…if educated they will get married by themselves, uh she will love uh someone, and she will go….away from the house….and if she will do like that and our prestige will be gone."

> And uh its a very pity, you know, it was very difficult to find the girls and who can come to be a female teacher in future. It was our uh difficulty. And when she will train, and the people will not give the job for female because they thinks, "oh, female *how can she teach*....she does not know, know how to teach," even she's uh trained, she got training and I mean that was the discrimination. It was very, very deep-rooted problem, you know, not only one problem....there were so many problem. (life-history interview, 19 February 1993)

What does each woman have to build upon? And what forces, ultimately, drive these mothers and daughters in their activity? Like Westman (1991), I suggest that the answer to these questions is the same story: to feel at home with one's own people.

There is as yet no one structure, no one main story of progress, no curriculum, and no conceptualization that can accommodate the relationships and insights of all people. Here I am indebted to Middleton (1993) and Miller (1990, p. 17) for suggestion to "explore what happens when instead...we base our curriculum on conceptualizations of 'the teacher as the researcher of her own underlying assumptions, as connected to her particular biographical, cultural, and historical situations'" (Middleton, 1993, p. 174). Research on teachers and teacher education is challenging categories to activate such potential.

If "gender is a conscription of persons into a kind of dictionary" (see Hogle, 1988, p. 99), my own story of being female and becoming a teacher is a telling image: A foot in a New World as well as one in an Old World. A story of being and becoming a *teacher* in a New World in my own family context of artisan/peasants and workers holds this meaning: It means to occupy an unfamiliar space in a new centre or nexus of power. In the Old World/New World context of learning in Canada from the stories of displaced German-Romanians in my extended family, I was taught teachers are spiritual leaders "who can see right through you"; while to be a *woman* is a *locus classicus*, best-known as a site of vulnerability. One Nepalese daughter imagining herself as a mother advising her own daughter invokes a heartfelt sentiment shared by other women I encountered in conversations in Nepal: "I don't wish daughter to get married and go to another's house" (woman student teacher, life-history survey, 1993). Understanding such course of travel and its consequences may serve as a pedagogical signature of a curriculum critical for women and girls.

And it has been written that "the degree and extent of change in a complex system, such as the higher education field is dependent upon the intersection of interests, strategic behaviour, norms and values, and ideologies of *all* concerned" (Meek, 1991, p. 166). This raises two points for mothers and daughters of Nepal, which are just as relevant to the higher education field. Meek (1991) suggests: 1) "structure itself should be viewed as a source of change" and 2) "an individual's or group's disposition towards change is largely dependent upon their position" (p. 156). Bourdieu (1988) suggests, that "it is not, as is usually thought, political stances which determine people's stances on things academic, but their positions in the academic field"—and I might add, my response to *his* call, their part in the continuity of plotlines from kitchen to classroom—"which inform the stances that they adopt on political issues in general as well as on academic problems" (pp. xvi-xvii).

I am reminded again how "the artist as teacher," as teacher-researcher, "has to look for new possibilities and suggest ways of healing the wounds of history" (Nandan, 1991, p. 139). Like Virginia Woolf, Christa Wolf, and other women, I, too, see the challenge, "as a pacifist 'Outsider,' forced to try to find her own words" (Oldfield, 1989, p. 162).

'The answers were in [our] stories. The answers were [our] stories'[7]

Listening to a life lived as a composition of value takes space and time. What the effort tells us about women who become teachers and who have had to be advocates of their own further education and then became advocates of female education in general is some of what it means to be in the world and to serve. Having listened to Nepalese women teachers talk about the social significance of their lives and, then, only in retrospect coming to realize the significance overall of what I had asked young women becoming teachers in Nepal to imagine themselves as—mothers advising daughters—I found not only my approach to theory had changed, but I had been changed.

As White (1992) suggests, with all that is in one's mind when we set out to study and to write about women, as a woman, the difficulties experienced "in actually operationalizing this focus leads me to suggest a new category—'desk-sound': to capture the radical disjuncture between the 'logic' of the academic desk and the practicalities of field research" (p. 5). When I return from the field, what is the position from which I will "see," from which I will hear?

To regenerate imaginative dialogue between the academic literature and women teachers' interpretations, as models of diversity and possibility played out within ascribed roles in the home, school, neighborhood, and community of the North/South hemispheres,[8] is also to take a turn toward an inclusive family of stories about woman as teacher. The early learning that takes place in our lives have "existential and internal conditions" (Clandinin & Connelly, 1994) and cultivate or silence voice (Belenky et al., 1986; Grieve, 1994). Nepalese teachers tell us that for mothers and daughters to be themselves is to be exiled by many others, and even from each other, and yet to comply with others or even each other is to be exiled from themselves.

Guru-lekhika tells us that a woman "must be willing to feel anxious sometimes, otherwise she might as well have stayed in the nest" (Estés, 1992, p. 84). She tells us that she has been wounded by the sorrow of the life of her mother:

> Ah, [my husband] is supporting me. He is very good, yes. He always supports me. And whenever I write stories and he just, he's the first, um you can say, not audience, you can say listener, no? He just uh sits and he listens carefully....He is very good, yes....Yes, yes, yes. And sometimes he just...encourages me, you know he does all these things. And sometime he told me that "if you don't work, I think I will be able to feed you. Uh, at least *daal bhaat* [the basic foodstuff of Nepal, *daal*-lentils, *bhaat*-rice (boiled)], I can provide you by my work." There is something inside me, I don't feel secure, you know. Because I have seen the life of my mother and all. (life-history interview, 29 April 1993)

Whereas one of her stories has become a teaching tale for use at the "campus level, and 10+2... levels, and the students have to read" and "study this," her mother's story sets up for her this internal precondition:

> And uh I don't feel security, you can say that, because there is psychology, because of my childhood, because I had to face many trouble and I don't believe *men*, actually I don't believe my husband also sometime, you know?...Because it makes, that uh now I am earning, now I am doing so, I am getting everything, I think, I may lose, yes, if it's some money or love, like that, it come to me. (life-history interview, 29 April 1993)

In Canada, Gaskell, McLaren, and Novogrodsky (1989) have helped me to assert that if a major objective of any government is to increase women's and girls' participation in the educational activities of a country, then "to empower girls as students, we [also] have to empower women as educators" (p. 63) of female concerns. Women and girls' survival, agency, perception, and "education hinges on the strength of her knowledge, and the fate of her resistance," a theoretical "journey linked with the recovery of voice" (Gilligan, Lyons, & Hanmer, 1990, pp. 3-4). Girls face a major conflict in becoming at once an adult and a woman in their culture, "the deeply knotted dilemma of how to listen both to herself and to the tradition, how to care for herself as well as for others," and "this dilemma is frequently so difficult for adolescent girls and adult women that it can confound belief in their own perceptions and experience" (Gilligan, Rogers, & Brown, 1990, p. 328). This is a tormenting tension that mothers and daughters know well must be borne.

I have learned from Neelam Basnet and others to see "the process of creating intellectuals" in the creating of daughters who can carry on long-term female advocacy as a process/project that crosses boundaries and "is long, difficult, full of contradictions, advances and retreats, dispersals and regroupings" (Gramsci, 1971/1980, p. 334).

To achieve such insight and discursive practice that builds bridges between levels of meaning when I get back home, I must not only honor all those women who have gone before but those for whom Nepalese women teachers and I are working, those who come after. And "while women's lives have been intertwined for decades," and such pairings or teams as I might make with individuals in Nepal, may have "difficult moments," we will, likely, stay "together in a tightly knit working relationship" for as long as the "warmth," generosity, and support generated between and amongst us is extended (Alonso, 1993, p. 261). Casey (1993, p. 67) believes "a problematic recognizes that problems are never really solved," thus, I must honor these women and myself, their questions and my questions as, following Johnson (1980, p. 202), "elements taken from different existing problematics may, in a new order, and constituting a new field, yield us greater explanatory power and political purchase."[9]

To enter into the current situation for women who are and who are becoming teachers in Nepal is to enter a site of vulnerability and a site whereby she may extend her story to achieve social status, making this more than just a site of those interested in and responsible for encouraging and making possible women's and girls' increased participation in educational activities of the country. I have come to believe that harsh prejudgments of any of the players, both male and female, suggest one instrument is telling the whole story. My assumption is that a simple political instrumentality can never tell the whole story, even in terms of one instrument. Isaiah Berlin's prose and point of view plucked just so reveals a similar return: "'Out of the crooked timber of humanity,' he quotes Kant as saying, 'no straight thing was ever made'....Contradiction is necessary" (in Allemang, 1994, p. A11). I found where there is consensus there sometimes appears to be stalemate and where there is contradiction there may be further movement.

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[1] I am indebted to Margaret Haughey for this rich metaphor.

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[2] This is a juxtaposition of two translations: Here, a male Nepalese Brahmin colleague distinguished himself by sometimes writing and/or telling me that "this is not true," as did another Brahmin female, or "that is not true" and then in brackets telling me what was true. Or sometimes the words that they chose like "inculcate" seemed out of place when juxtaposed with the words the teacher herself chose in English or those heard in the field by an American Peace Corps worker and her low-caste Nepalese husband whom I hired to accompany me on a walk to meet this mountain village teacher. Unless otherwise noted in the text, the women teachers I encountered in Nepal spoke in English. And after discussion with the Nepalese community in Canada, there was some agreement that the translators in the field had the upperhand by being there, by proximity to the teacher and the teacher-researcher, by looking in both our eyes, and by contemplating all our gestures and silences. This woman's words were further complicated in the sense that sometimes she spoke in Gurung.

[3] The term "Third World" and its "naming" has been subject to subsequent changes in the vocabulary of development. I am retaining the naming employed by the authors at the time of their writing. Measor (1994) reminds us that "there are theoretical and political questions involved in the language we use to refer to...countries" (p. 115).

[4] Here I am indebted to Margaret Haughey, Department of Educational Policy Studies, University of Alberta, for pointing out the disconcerting capitalization of International Literacy Year juxtaposed with the lower-case implication in Year of the *girl child*. I have chosen to retain the representation employed by MOEC/UNESCO (1990, p. 34) as a display of dissonance in sign.

[5] Goetz (1991) notes that "the process of modifying women's projects to fit the blueprints for standard development projects has distorted their original objectives" (p. 135), and this would certainly apply to the EGWN Project (see *Education of Girls and Women in Nepal*, 1989, a draft working paper for internal discussion that was made available to me by UNICEF/Kathmandu staff). However, I do not believe the whole story can be neatly pinned down. The world-wide shifts in approaches, since the 1950s, to social development policies offer a picture of diversity of interventions for women and girls in developing countries that have been categorized by Buvinic from "welfare" to "equity" to "anti-poverty," to two other approaches, namely, to "efficiency" and "empowerment" (Moser, 1991, p. 94). The EGWN Project touches on all of these approaches at certain times, yet it does not fall within the confines of any one of them. This has been a strength rather than a weakness of the project and reflects the support of and working between the lines of Neelam Basnet, who, for the duration of the project, not only offered support but found complex terrain suggestive, in time and space, of contingency, irony, and solidarity, and she carried out the plans and projects/programs in her capacity as Chief, Office of the Women's Education Project, Ministry of Education and Culture.

[6] This young teacher has raised a very significant point here and is one that White (1992) has raised when she writes that "in rural Bangladesh, as elsewhere, a single woman is an anomaly and something of a threat"

(p. 154). A woman who stands alone, who stands for herself, who stands up for herself is much more vulnerable to (for instance, physical) attack. Writes White (1992), "it is also a major obstacle for single women in becoming self-reliant: rumours about…loss of virtue are inevitable and vicious" (p. 154).

[7] From Clandinin and Connelly (1994): "The answers were in the stories. The answers were the stories."

[8] New Zealand, Sue Middleton's home base in the Southern hemisphere seems to have much in common in terms of educational restructuring in a time of conservative restoration with parts of a Northern hemisphere nation, Canada, and one of her provinces, for instance, Alberta, and especially with regard to the relationship of the dominant discourse of scholarship as it is fed to these countries by the United States and Britain. This is a unique period in history, not least in the changing and fluid economic and political realignments in the world (Watson, 1992), but also, more specifically, in gender patterns which are beginning to be seen as very similar around the world (Kelly, 1992b). International comparisons are one way of trying to test theories of what is significant in relation to gender equity and education (Yates, 1992).

[9] This has an affinity with Gramsci's (1971/1980) "own construction of continuity" and suggests to me, that although those most often heard in my family spoke as if "they had a monopoly on the past, not only conservatives have a heritage" (Casey, 1993, pp. 156-7). Douglas (1966) suggests "as time goes on and experiences pile up, we make a greater and greater investment in our system of labels. So a conservative bias is built in" (p. 67). It is herein I have chosen to make problematic that which gives us confidence. Casey (1993) shares in this lament; "Alas, the relationship of the left to its own tradition(s) is not an easy one," adding, "'(s)' in the same sense as Lather (1991:xv) writes about 'feminism(s)' and 'neo-Marxism(s),' to indicate multiplicity of theories/practices within the largest category, as well as within its various historical 'parts'" (pp. 174-5f). We can see this as a strength rather than as a weakness. Nandan (1991) is insightful when she writes, "To be able to see the world as plural, diverse, secular and democratic is a major challenge to the intellectual maturity of the educators and opinion-makers. This is not an easily attainable task for it requires sea changes within one's conceptual and cognitive framework" (pp. 135-6).

Chapter 3

WOMEN'S VOICES 'HEAR EACH OTHER INTO SPEECH'[1]: PULLING ON THREADS

"the answer"

Tell me every detail of your day—
when do you wake and sleep, what eat and drink?
How spend the interval from dawn to dark—
what do you work at, read, what do you think?
Whom do you love and how much?—Measure it
and answer me, or leastwise answer half.
These are not idle questions, they provide
the spindle around which new-spinning wool
winds as it dreams its future....
—P.K. Page (1994)

"virginia woolf"

they published your diary
and that's how I got to know you
the key to the room of your own in a mind without end
and here's a young girl
on a kind of a telephone line through time
and the voice at the other end comes like a long lost friend...
if you need to know that you weathered the storm
of cruel mortality
a hundred years later i'm sitting here living proof
...each life has its place
the place where you hold me
the dark in a pocket of truth...
and so it was for you
when the river eclipsed your life
and sent your soul like a message in a bottle to me
and it was my re-verse [re-birth]...
—Indigo Girls (1992), ***rites of passage***

Research design

Nepalese women teachers are regarded by at least some members in sociological and educational research story and conversation circles to be positive role models for girls. In these circles where correspondence amongst members is changeable, the female teacher as "change agent" is regarded as having a strong voice and character she may extend in learned society. In accord with my doctoral committee, I took this research question to Nepal:

> How have Nepalese girls come to be teachers in contexts where men and boys outnumber and outrank women and girls in educational hierarchies and in the dominant discursive text and, furthermore, what might we learn if women teachers' life stories counted more significantly in the larger public domain?

Depending upon the method I chose there was the potential I could return having extracted what others may take the credit and pay for, more "conscious of my positioning within the ruling apparatus with power to record and to inscribe" (Middleton, 1993, p. 148; Smith, 1987), even then only as an errand girl. Like Middleton (1993) and Oakley (1982), I wanted to pull on threads between researcher and respondent, as a "personal involvement is more than dangerous bias—it is the condition under which people come to know each other and to admit others into their lives" (Oakley, 1982, p. 58). And it is a "feminist impulse" (see Casey, 1990, 1992, 1993) that helped me in considering such research: To answer back as one of many passionate scholars whose creative Furies have taken them on a similar journey to write about their own lives and the lives of women as a way of learning more about teaching.

As a teacher-researcher, a different, if not dissident daughter of displaced persons in Canada, and a mother, I have questions of my own. I want to ask and answer to these questions:

> What does it mean to be a woman and a teacher in the world today, and where and who are the other women becoming teachers that I need to know? Where are the mothers and daughters telling their own stories?[2] How and why have they and their stories been hidden from me? How might our shared, and sharing of, experiences and knowledge extend and strengthen what it means to be a woman and a teacher, a female researcher as a receptive ear from a "foreign" land and a female speaker whose voice is being heard, both in a developing context?[3]

Choice of life history analysis

From my reading of the literature on education and development, the way that questions have been framed to understand the patterns of women's education and work often are not generated by looking at the world from the perspective of women's needs and lives (Kelly & Elliott, 1982; Kelly & Slaughter, 1991): A "devastating conceptual error," according to Minnich; Lerner suggests that looking at the world from a woman's perspective is as significant as "the Copernican revolution" (in Personal Narratives Group, 1989, p. 4). Through such a "Copernican" lens, I attempted to gain an understanding of what it means to be a woman and a teacher and whether there are threads (i.e., gender-sensitive methods and concepts) to pull on.

The method used in this study is life history analysis, which focuses upon what Mills (1959/1970) and others have referred to as the "tension between biography, history, and social structure" (Middleton, 1993, p. 159). This method allows the researcher to concentrate on how social structures "help construct our 'gendered identities' as women or men; how such 'gendering' has changed over time; how it varies between social cultures and social classes" (Middleton, 1993, p. 149), yet remains "sensitive to context, interaction, and response" in terms of composing life (Bateson, 1989, p. 2).

Life histories present analysis based upon field notes and other forms of records (Sanjek, 1990b). Adair (1960) describes the life history fieldwork process; informative accounts of collecting life history field note texts are provided by Freeman (1979), Mintz (1960), and Winter (1959); and Langness and Frank (1981) and Watson and Watson-Franke (1985) offer a historical and critical overview. Even though there is critical information about the life history method, particularly with regard to women setting out to record the lives of women who are and/or who are becoming teachers (Casey, 1993; Middleton, 1993), no perfect way exists to gather and present life histories (Crapanzano, 1984; Patai, 1988).

Life histories offer much promise for capturing the socializing influence of the full range of life experiences or "architecture of the self" (Pinar, 1986) that women bring to teacher education programs and to teaching (see for example, Casey, 1992, 1993; Middleton, 1992a, 1993; Nelson, 1992; Prentice & Theobald, 1991; Weiler, 1992). According to Zeichner and Gore (1990), in recent years, studies in a number of countries, have employed a variety of biographical, autobiographical, and life history methods to understand the development of teachers' knowledge and, thus, teachers as "change agents." These include: autobiography (Grumet, 1980, 1988; Pinar, 1986); collaborative autobiography (Butt & Raymond, 1989; Butt et al., 1992; Butt, Raymond, & Yamagishi, 1988); narrative inquiry (Connelly & Clandinin, 1987, 1994); repertory grid techniques (Ingvarson & Greenway, 1984); diary interviews (Burgess, 1988); and the combined use of biographical and ethnographic methods and/or conversation and narrative in the same study (Bajracharya, 1993-1994, 1995; Chitrakar, 1993-1994, 1995; Clandinin et al., 1993c; Florio-Ruane, 1991; Raymond & Surprenant, 1988).

This is a dynamic area whose recent burgeoning of critical and imaginative methods is gaining momentum as the lives of women who become teachers come to be heard and to be published. "A feminist impulse…gives energy to much of this work, with an explicit purpose of counteracting the systematic suppression of women's voices" (Casey, 1990, p. 301; see also Geiger, 1986 for an extensive overview of women's life history research). I would like to add my own experiences to acquire a better understanding of women's experiences of education. But "methodological reorganization" (Smith, 1974) is directed in its development by its audience(s) and Middleton's (1993) reminder is telling, for a doctoral student's writing "to pass, it would have to fit the conventions of the dominant sociological and educational research communities" (p. 67). Given that constraint, I wanted to describe that method that would not alienate women teachers from their stories, or alienate me from mine. Like Middleton (1993), I did not want to turn teachers' narratives "into abstracted data"; like Oakley (1982), I felt the need to transform "the methodology of 'hygienic' research with its accompanying mystification of the researcher and the researched as objective instruments of data production" (p. 58).

I was looking to develop this research in a way that was both critical and imaginative. Recent work seeks to gather and analyse biographies, autobiographies, oral histories, life histories, and personal narrative research in the field. Some of this work which uses various forms of life history methods (i.e., Butt, 1984, 1989; Quicke, 1988; Tripp, 1987) clearly illustrates the educative and emancipatory potential of research that seeks to understand the development of teachers' knowledge (Zeichner & Gore, 1990). Some of the recent work highlights the critical and the imaginative, i.e., respect for the "interpretations" as well as the pieces of "information," which are supplied by women (e.g., Casey, 1988, 1990, 1992, 1993; Middleton, 1985, 1992a, 1993; Popular Memory Group, 1982). This fits with the central concern of my study, which places emphasis not on past events but the interpretations we make of them and the importance women and girls attach to these interpretations in their becoming strong characters or "change agents" through their transformation to teachers.

Rationale for employing qualitative research techniques

It has been noted that "the high visibility of labour market considerations in educational reform work subsequently influenced research models," and that predominant "quantitative" research techniques "tend to adjust to the 'straight roads…while women's winding routes have been set aside"; thus, "women were so often looked upon as 'gravel in the machinery' in educational policy" (Elgqvist-Saltzman, 1992, pp. 41, 46). As such, qualitative research techniques are recommended: To date, studies which include a small number of women interviewed to elicit their life stories have revealed that educational decisions are the result of a complex interaction wherein a network of social relations can be traced (e.g., Casey, 1988, 1993; Elgqvist-Saltzman et al., 1986; Middleton 1985, 1993). Women's educational dreams, plans, and obstacles have revealed how their experiences of becoming and being a teacher are interwoven with their experiences of roles as daughters in certain family and socio-economic contexts, as wives, and, not least, as mothers, not in oppositional but in relational terms.

Elgqvist-Saltzman (1991, 1992), Elgqvist-Saltzman and Sampei-Kjellson (1986), and others interested in promoting more fruitful communication between researchers and respondents in the North and in the South (Elgqvist-Saltzman et al., 1986) have revealed that the evaluation of educational reforms is a very complex question. These researchers make it quite clear that many social aspects of which we are still unaware, for instance, in this study, the Nepal-Canada context, have to be considered to establish cooperation in the evaluation of educational reforms: "How are women's knowledge, experiences and values…to enrich the development of society?" (Elgqvist-Saltzman, 1992, p. 52). What these authors have clearly illustrated is that small-scale studies using various forms of life history methods are effective for uncovering and understanding many of the social aspects that can affect educational reforms. And until reforms in higher education focus on "all sides and duties of human life—within an international research agenda" (Elgqvist-Saltzman, 1992, p. 54)—"equalizations in both women's patterns of higher education and their life chances are unlikely to occur" (Kelly & Slaughter, 1991, p. 8).

Respondents

Participants for interview were chosen according to the needs of the study. Initially, I hoped to interview women with a broad, general knowledge and whose experience was considered typical, and then, as the study progressed, to expand the study to participants with particular knowledge. In the end, those who were interviewed had been given permission by their school principals and were interested in the study. Nominated, network, or snowball sampling are the common methods of obtaining a list of possible respondents (Morse, 1991). In partnership with CERID and others, nominations proved to be the most useful, and it had the advantage of easing the introductory phase of the interview.

The establishment of criteria for inclusion and exclusion of respondents is a fundamental example of the researcher's power (Casey, 1988). According to Morse (1991), respondents "must be selected or carefully chosen according to specific qualities": for example, they must be "*knowledgeable about the topic* and experts by virtue of their involvement in specific life events and/or associations" (p. 132). A "good" respondent is someone "who has undergone or is undergoing the experience," for example, of being and becoming a woman teacher, "who is able to reflect and provide detailed experiental information about the phenomenon" and is "willing to share the experience with the interviewer" (Morse, 1991, p. 132). Controlling who is to be interviewed was ensured by primary selection.

The criticism that these methods are "biased" by virtue of the selection process is valid—"these methods facilitate a certain type of [respondent] with a certain knowledge being included in the study, but *that is the purpose and intent of using these methods*" (Morse, 1991, p. 138).

However, I must add that I was willing to interview anyone who expressed an interest in being interviewed and in that regard I also expanded the perimeters: for instance, having met an in-service teacher in a class at a regional Nepalese campus of Tribhuvan University, where I was distributing questionnaires, she invited me to her school and I interviewed her and two of her colleagues. She was very grateful for being included and her friends at her school also were excited about being involved. I also heard about a young Rai teacher through a friendship that occurred in the field. I accompanied a Canadian expatriate and her Nepalese son to school for a parent-teacher interview; and having met the principal, I was given permission to interview his daughter. In the end, the only constraint to selection was time, for the longer I spent in the field word-of-mouth, referred to in other places as "an amazing system unknown to Western technology (e.g., "coconut wireless" or "coconut telephone"),[4] expanded the number of invitations to schools I received from principals, teachers, and parents.

Representativeness

One question however is the representativeness of the selected women's life histories and stories. I must emphasize that the point was to avoid a reductionist approach that determines the "truth" of a woman's words solely in terms of the representativeness of her social circumstances (Personal Narratives Group, 1989). Rather, I sought to encompass the multiplicity of ways of interpreting events that a woman's life story reveals and which reflects important features of her conscious experience and social landscape. I wanted to hear those truths and to understand them clearly, "to discover in which sense, where, [and] for which purpose" (Passerini, in Personal Narratives Group, 1989, p. 261) they are true for the respondent. I wanted these women's words to inform our realities about women teachers. I wanted to learn to respond sensitively to the experiences of women.

Assumptions

The understanding that Nepalese women are not voiceless or wordless was assumed. Women who initially appear silent and without self-confidence can make use of intervention to explore contradictions in social reality. However, I did not encounter silent women lacking in self-confidence as I was led to "expect."

I have always assumed that personal narratives are particularly rich sources, and most recently I felt that they would add theoretical variation to the research because "attentively interpreted, they illuminate both the logic of individual courses of action and the effects of system-level constraints within which those courses evolve" (Personal Narratives Group, 1989, p. 6). According to Helle (1991), "where narrative's power of specifying combines with theory's power of generalizing, ever more inclusive and multiplistic standpoints for knowing become possible" (p. 63). I had assumed that individual women teachers' stories were not in and of themselves extraneous to inquiry but central to a valid portrayal (Florio-Ruane, 1991). I had also assumed that narrative, biography, and/or story are "powerful teachers of the themes and challenges of the adult years" and a significant sacrifice in the rite of passage to those adult years are these "implicit understandings" about what we, as women, bring to our working lives (Brody et al., 1991, pp. 260-2). These authors emphasize how "narrative and the personal story," acting "as the predominant schema for understanding the life course," best "create a context" of interaction and response "in which professionals can explore the paradoxes" or contradictions of "human development" (Brody et al., 1991, pp. 262-3). And as Middleton (1993) surmises, I believe, too, "it is important to bear in mind that the ways we tell our stories—the kinds of stories that we tell—are brought into being within particular power relations and are elicited by different audiences" (p. 68).

From a reading taken from my own and my mother's connecting storyline, I had assumed that other women's narratives might also reveal what it is like to be "found" and "lost" in school and what such loss of human connectedness might entail. Thus I assumed too that stories "save life…through illuminating the power of connection.…within lives—that is, across time and context—and between lives—across time, context, persons, generations, cultures, and gender" (Brody et al., 1991, p. 264; see also Stafford, 1991). And I am very excited to write that a significant part of my life as the daughter of displaced German-Romanians has been saved by my discovery of German and other women writers, mothers and daughters as significant teachers, whose life stories and literary and theological/feminist works for peace I discovered in the working through of the connecting lines of this dissertation (e.g., Christa Wolf, 1976/1980; Dorothee Sölle, 1982, 1983/1988, 1984, 1986; for the connecting story that saved my life see Appendix A).

In response to Butt et al. (1992) and those who judge the necessity of making sure that the teacher's life is recounted in ways that seek to minimize the fallibility of memory, selective recall, repression, the shaping of stories according to dispositions, internal idealization and nostalgia, I feel that I must have assumed that by opening this area up as a source of possibility, of discovery, this is the very space where knowledge and theory must be and are grounded.

Limitations

The data collection methods were not new to me, but being in Nepal while my committee was in Canada made problematic the discussion and sharing of insights, concerns, and experience regarding further data collection. This was a concern for a neophyte researcher and a mechanism for communication was established. I took my personal computer and portable printer to Nepal in order to transcribe the interview audiotapes, but even without it analysis could proceed during data collection. The quality of this research rests very much on skills of interviewing, working in a cross-cultural context, fidelity and creativity, caring and courage, sensitivity and commitment. All this and more was needed in coming up to the standards already established by the women teachers I encountered in Nepal who work with scarce resources and develop innovative solutions when problems arise in the field. Having been trained and worked professionally as a journalist and theatre practitioner, and having travelled to a number of countries in the South was beneficial.

Interviews were in English, which was not the first language of the participants, but this did not prove to be a problem. Only two of the interviews with thirteen women teachers required the assistance of translation. Having learned English as a Second Language predominantly from women speakers in the oral traditions of my own extended family in Canada, and having learned more about oral traditions and interpretation from Urion (1991) it seemed a natural process that what began before I entered the field assisted me in learning Nepali as at the same time I began to learn metaphorical explication from Nepalese women teachers.

And having had dreams of a better world, come like needy children tugging on my sleeves in Canada, Nepal, Fiji, Venezuela, come like a woman in a *barrio* where I stayed in Nicaragua who tried every night to tell me by acting it out until finally one night when I got the translator away from the local beer hall we heard about children lined up like prisoners against a fence, with these dreams I could not view life and travel at their expense. I could feel the heart, the mind on a radical parallel course. I don't know if strong feelings are limitations but when they threaten to break the frame, I ask questions. I have to see, I have to know, I have to wonder why? Is there not a better practice?

As Patai (1988), a literary critic, who collected, edited, and translated oral accounts of the lives of 60 "ordinary" Brazilian women of different ages, races, and economic situations found:

> —"What might have been considered offensive personal curiosity" is transformed into something respectable, legitimated by "having a 'project,'" including the paraphernalia of tape recorders and notebooks.
> —Being a foreigner with language problems "help[ed] restore a needed balance between the researcher and the researched, especially in the case of poor…women." (p. 144)

Responding to current conditions by devising innovative methods and implementing such techniques has been used by theatre practitioners the world over for solving problems of cross-cultural communication (see Schulz, 1990b). "The intellectual search for meaning is essentially a creative one and this creativity emerges from an inherent faith in, and respect for, the poor" (Hossain, 1994, p. 186). Having worked through modernisation theory to understand the method of educators working with scarce resources in Bangladesh, Hossain (1994) states, "in this sense, power lies in the mobilisation of cultural values" (p. 186). Communicating "across difference" leads to unpredictable and interesting explanations that have currency in postmodern times. Learning to live, work, and make a "home" in a new setting, even a simple thing like buying cooking oil (it was adulterated with water) or sugar (I was warned by Nepalese women how the sugar might be cut with ground glass) were all part of the experience.

The context of representation, "a distance separating the spoken words from the written word," involves presentation, facilitating comprehension of others' stories (i.e., "how will this play in Peoria?"), and the further distortion of editing and rearranging in conventional forms (Patai, 1988; Plath, 1990). To the inevitable distortion of presenting oral history in the conventions of the written form, the further distortion (and resonance/reverberation) of conveying in English what was spoken in Nepali or Gurung must be added. When we analyze a life history, we are analyzing a text, not social reality, but rather, a text which is itself the product of a complex collaboration. Crapanzano (1984) is skeptical because he sees

> a real limit to our lucidity—total lucidity, the omniscient narrator, is a literary construct—*and* to our communicative capacity. A discipline that lays claim to science still has to recognize such limits is not to have to remain silent...but to operate inventively within them. (p. 959)

This directs me back to E. R. Wolf's (1988) perplexing question: "Are we not faced with more heterogeneity, more interaction across boundaries, more interpenetration, more interdigitation, more complexity...than we have allowed for in much of our past endeavors?" (p. 753).

At the point of summing up, one is left with an understanding that recognizing limitations in research and working through them may actually be the starting point for any good practice, a point that is neatly stated by Kappeler (1986),

> I do not really wish to conclude and sum up, rounding off the argument so as to dump it in a nutshell on the reader. A lot more could be said about any of the topics I have touched upon....I have meant to ask questions, to break out of the frame....The point is not a set of answers, but making possible a different practice. (p. 212)

This is a practice whose practitioners believe, as does Clandinin (1992), "that listening to teachers' stories is a way of beginning to share with teachers the work of educational research," who believe and reserve "a place for teachers' stories alongside researcher's accounts in order that voices from both theory and practice can be heard" (p. 61). From such a vantage point, Clandinin (1992) suggests that "we can then begin to construct methods of working with current and prospective teachers and researchers to educate them to the imaginative possibilities of reading this literature" (p. 61).

Ethical considerations

Coming to know Nepalese women teachers and teachers' life stories raises a number of ethical considerations that also impinge upon a number of domains. Measor and Sikes (1992) note that the question of a value base is rather neglected and very little about ethics has been spelled out. These issues have not been spelled out in the *University Policy Related to Ethics in Human Research* (University of Alberta, 1985), which addresses such basic tenets as safety, anonymity, confidentiality, informed consent, and researcher responsibility and competence.

Patai (1988) suggests that "given the structural" implications, "inequalities...typically exist between researcher and researched"; issues of power and process raise "important ethical problems." Conversely, she also stresses another dimension of the interview process, "the sheer pleasure of listening to a person weave a tale. Oral history is seductive work, not only to the speaker but also to the listener" (p. 145). For women teachers, telling their own stories became an "extraordinary event" (Casey, 1993); for working-class or low-income women, telling their own stories became "another luxury" of "limited access" (Patai, 1988).

Goodson (1992) suggests that both ethical and methodological issues of power and process are best dealt with through thorough and clear procedural guidelines: informed consent, followed by feedback and negotiation of all data and reports; teachers having a final power of veto over the data and reports in which they feature (p. 247). Technical considerations of how to handle the raw data of research, which involves questionnaires being identified by codes and not names, data reported anonymously or in aggregate from various sources, informed consent in writing, safe storage of data, erasure of audiotapes upon completion of the research process, are not difficult, but using these women's stories for teacher-research purposes requires an ethical commitment that goes beyond these relatively easy to resolve issues (see for example, Clandinin & Connelly, 1988).

One way, put forth by Zeichner and Gore (1990), to begin the democratizing process is to ensure that, at minimum, those whose are studied have an opportunity to read and react to researchers' portrayals. As was expected to be demonstrated by these women's stories, no woman's life is exactly like any other woman's life. Each woman is unique, and her transformation to teacher is unique to her. Following Schmukler and Savigliano (1986), I propose "that the interpretation of each other's realities should be the outcome of a dialogical process in which negotiations and exchanges of meanings are made explicit and help to evaluate the ongoing process of research and action" (p. 37). Zeichner and Gore (1990) suggest that

> if there are disagreements between researchers and researched about some aspect of the socialization account, then either these differences should be negotiated until some agreement is reached or the perspectives of those who are studied should be published along with the researchers' accounts. (p. 342)

And these authors suggest that "ideally, there would be mutual constructions of the socialization portrayals" in these stories "by the researchers and the researched" (Zeichner & Gore, 1990, p. 342).

I have been led to take one step further with the dedicated teachers I encountered in Nepal. I have been led by engagement in mutual discourse to recognize I share in this belief, that ideally the outcome would be new creation and re-creation, that new knowledge might emerge from our personal interaction. I would like to stress that my commitment and sensitivity to research, in terms of learning, thinking, and action, crisscross domains. This is a point of view that is not yet fully developed in the dominant discourse, but has been developed in me in educative relationship with these and many other dedicated teachers. Hence, my aim is that they and we, and those who come after, must benefit in some substantial way from my research labours. Thus, I continue to work recursively to extend voices to receptive ears and vice versa.

What I bring to the task of listening to Nepalese women teachers is this: "A hearer isn't meant to understand the story at all levels, immediately. It is as if it unfolds" (Urion, 1991). I found it particularly moving and in terms of the responsibility and response-ability I now have, when a mountain village Gurung teacher and another teacher a day's walk away, *Guru-aamaa,* recounted a day in each one of their lives that began in the usual way but ended at this point of significance: when they met me. What this then went on to complete in their story of being and becoming a teacher in Nepal was similar to a concern that other women teachers told me motivated their desire to speak about their lives: The hope that it would help other women and girls and help those who think, and perhaps, act on such a concern.

This text is full of metaphors I am still in the process of unfolding: "It would be impossible to unfold them all" (Lightning, 1992, p. 63). These women who are and who are becoming teachers in Nepal, I encountered, are vulnerable and made themselves open. As a woman and a listener, I am vulnerable and made myself open. The "recognition of responsibility and authority" came from Nepalese women teachers "having expert knowledge about the context for knowledge, about the place that specific knowledge is appropriately brought out, and the readiness of the individual to perceive it" (see Lightning, 1992, p. 63, for a Cree Elder's point of view). Casey (1990) also points out "the ways in which contemporary women teachers have already theorized and acted upon a variety" of their own "reconstructions" of concepts as relational, "which can only exist dialogically" (pp. 317-8). I think particularly of the metaphor for identity that one Gurung teacher used in her correspondence after I had returned home from Nepal: I refer to her as *Guru-heart,*

> My family and friends call me [a name which] *means heart.* I realize that though it is not an easy task for a person like me who had had an education of low standard in an underdeveloped country like Nepal to achieve success, I feel that if I could get through the barrier...I would put my heart and soul into it to achieve success, whether I succeed or not. (personal communication, 24 November 1993)

Interaction makes us vulnerable, because I now share the responsibility to speak: This woman is recognized as the heart of her community and to enter in "the ethos is self-enforcing...if the ethos is violated it can have resonant [ethical] implications in other spheres of life" (Lightning, 1992, p. 63). The principles of the relationship between us are "structural principles, which govern "the degree of unfolding necessary," and "the kind of metaphor and the extent of [that] metaphor" (Lightning, 1992, p. 63).

Guru-heart's metaphor, and the other metaphors that Nepalese women teachers have entrusted me to use to refer to their identity means that "their teachings are *individualized*" (Lightning, 1992). And like Lightning (1992) I am also taken with the way that another Nepalese woman teacher has used *heart*:

> Sometimes it means the physical heart that beats inside a live body. Sometimes it means something more than that. When it means more than the physical heart, it always means the physical heart as well. That is one of the bridges between levels of meaning. (p. 63)

And having come to understand that, I also wish to point "out that there are *standard* systems of metaphor that apply to all, as well" (Lightning, 1992, p. 63).

Nepalese women teachers' identity in the text that forms the basis for this thesis is very vulnerable. What I carry away from these stories is a sense of the enormous cost to the individual women of the responsibility that they have for the welfare of other human beings. And as Lightning (1992) points out, "this text could go anywhere (physically), and it could be misinterpreted, criticized, or mocked" (p. 63). Casey (1990) also noted: "It is relatively easy to predict that those who benefit from patriarchal capitalism will deny the validity of the gender-based cultural assets," in terms of the metaphorical explication and vocabulary, "of…female teaching force" (p. 302). Nepalese women teachers' narratives will be generally concealed within the dominant system of metaphors that are applied to all: "A masculinist prescription for industrial-like quality control and military-like discipline" (Casey, 1990, p. 302). As well, "what is somewhat more puzzling is the depreciation of [nurture] in the discourse of certain groups of feminists" that posit relational explication and vocabulary within "irreconcilable dichotomies" (Casey, 1990, p. 302). Casey (1990) points out what I understand only too well as a mother and as a daughter of displaced persons: "Since the maternal relationship can leave a woman in our society so materially and psychologically vulnerable, it is no wonder that so many look for another metaphor to describe their connections" (p. 313).

If the interpretation does not reflect the women's understandings, it could mislead others. To imagine that there is such a person as a "generic teacher" could also mislead others about the diversity and complexity of teachers' experiences. These narratives teach us about the social construction and lived-experience of metaphor. This is a consistent and deeply shared concern I have in common with Nepalese women teachers and others not to mislead but to set in place the proper circumstances for understanding to happen (see also Lightning's [1992] discussion, p. 63). There is also this shared concern that motivated our continuing interest in metaphorical explication of the topic: To continue to use whatever means, "to point out," as *Guru-lekhika* says in her life, in her writings, and in her recollections with me, where the teacher, the listener, the reader, the metaphors, the conversations, fit in time and space, is a role she referred to as having taken on very early in her life, literally, as a compositor in a print shop. When a hearer has that story, the text combined with the performance of it, and knows the narrative sequence of it, there is yet another story to be told and it is contained within that story (Urion, 1991). This is the role, *Guru-lekhika* suggests, of a very good teacher.

My original doctoral supervisor, Carl Urion (1991) passed along to both Walter Lightning and myself an unpublished manuscript he wrote for his own children on how to listen to stories. As I continue to tell and retell stories and to find ways for this story of the researcher and the researched to unfold as I answer with my life, I agree this "is an incredibly complex genre" (Urion, 1991). Our theories and methods of engaging oral traditions with a teaching culture will be more complete when "the activities of family living and childrearing" (Martin, 1985) are recognized as "a work of public conscience and legislation" (Ruddick, 1984). What teachers' stories require is not only "a person who speaks the 'high' version of the language," in terms of gender-based cultural assets, here I am speaking about what Ruddick (1984, 1989/1990) has argued so well, that we need to bring the rich emotionality of "a *transformed* maternal thought into the public realm." We need to know and to bring "the principles for 'unfolding' the stories" of nurture, and have "some degree of skill in constructing" and reconstructing, telling and retelling "such stories" (Urion, 1991) with our lives: "Learning is felt" (Lightning, 1992).

This is an ethical implication: What has taken place between the researcher and the researched, like the teacher-as-mother and the student-as-child, like the method that has produced this text, "is not a product of transferring information" (Lightning, 1992). It has taken place "in I-thou terms" as an "encounter between two human beings which is the essence of education" (Casey, 1990, p. 318, see also Casey, 1988, 1993; Huebner, 1975). And this would seem "to be a distinctive and essential element of any feminist [re]definition of nurture in education" (Casey, 1990, p. 318). As *Guru-heart*'s metaphor unfolds I begin to understand more and more that this "is a product of creation and re-creation, in a mutual relationship of personal interaction, of information" (Lightning, 1992, p. 64). Hence, "it is not just a cognitive (mental) act," that needs stressing here, "but an emotional—thus physical—act" (Lightning, 1992, p. 64). And I am just beginning again to pull on threads in my own story: for example, of coming to understand how in my time on the Ship for World Youth, a three-month Japanese government sponsored "floating university," I learned many lessons that now seem to have prepared me in some way to listen in just this way. It means understanding what it meant when the leader of the Tongans, Ahosivi Naupoto, said to me as the leader of the Canadian participants on that sea-worthy journey, "make your heart comfortable." It means "to act in a heart-felt manner: to rely on our feelings as human beings, the feelings of compassion and love" (Lightning, 1992, p. 83). I have encountered teachers who speak of such acts and mental states that resonate through other domains: "It is a sensation. It is something that involves emotions....Learning is ideally a spiritual thing, because the compassionate mind is one that is spiritually centred" (Lightning, 1992, p. 64). "Close your eyes so that you can see *further*" (Elder at Maskwachees Cultural College, in Lightning, 1992, p. 87; emphasis added). There is yet more to consider in terms of ethics, in terms of the researcher and the researched, in terms of the learning that takes place, that must be reciprocated, that must be extended when we do this kind of work:

> Because domains are connected, because we are dealing with things wholistically, an act that we think of as being in one domain resonates in other domains. That means that when we think of something in one domain (e.g., "mental") of having an effect in [another] domain (e.g., "physical") is not just that it has an "effect," it is that *it exists* in that other domain as well. (Lightning, 1992, p. 65)

In New Zealand, Middleton's (1993) evocation of teacher as musically-spirited/minded dreamer/healer would find resonance with the metaphors and the teachers: *Guru-aamaa* and *Guru-heart*. These particular two Nepalese women teachers illustrate the assumption of resonance/reverberation that requires much further extension of an ethical standpoint: "Description and language [make] reference to many different domains and contexts. They are connected. Something spoken," something described, "has an effect....It resonates. That can be at the physical level, where spoken words physically vibrate the air, vibrate the eardrum, and resonate meaning" (Lightning, 1992, p. 64). A "double power" comes in literary terms through symbols, for instance, or onomatopoeia.

In oral traditions,"the singing of song and using the heart as drum are both mystical acts awakening layers of the psyche not much used or seen" (Estés, 1992, p. 161). *Guru-aamaa*'s recounting of having sung over the bones of her leg to make it strong enough after the unsuccessful medical interventions provided by her expatriate sponsor-mother is spiritually suggestive, but it also means physically, literally, "And I was not strong enough but I started to teach" (*Guru-aamaa*, life-history interview, 4 May 1993). Thus, *Guru-aamaa* lives. But *Guru-heart* and three other Gurung woman teachers are suggesting that their heart is also being cut or wrung out as an expense by recent restructuring of schools. According to

> Hindu *Tantras*…the heart is the *Anahata chakra*, the nerve center that encompasses feeling for another human, feeling for oneself, feeling for the earth.…Giving one's heart for new creation, for new life, for the forces of Life/Death/Life, is a descent into the feeling realm. (Estés, 1992, pp. 159-60)

While nurture is here consistently ascribed to women, "authority, which is always withheld, becomes an issue of severe gender conflict" (Casey, 1990, p. 318). And even though Nepalese women teachers are also

> women who have "authored" their own lives in significant ways, and have written the social script for themselves and for others…their narratives document the enormous obstacles which contemporary women must overcome to establish the sense of personal authority which is vital for every person. (Casey, 1990, p. 318; see also Young-Eisendrath & Weidemann, 1987)

A strange thing happened on my journey to Nepal and back home again: I began to want to drum up the heart to put it all back together again. When "minds engage in mutual discourse," one of the ethical considerations is also "not to attempt to state everything categorically or specifically, but to state things in such a way that there is a continuing unfolding of the meaning" (Lightning, 1992, p. 64), as living and learning continues. I have learned to follow this ethical responsibility, for the participation of any particular Nepalese woman who is and who is becoming a teacher through this research project is a duty of care I owe them in my retelling, which is based upon engagement and attention between what is written and what is never concluded (Lightning, 1992). And what that means is a matter I now turn to for interpretation: If anyone takes benefit from my work, I have been an intermediary for that expression. And ethical considerations involving this research and its teaching is based on what I have observed, what I have learned: "Relationships between people are inevitably reciprocal" (Lightning, 1992, p. 80). This is the way I have found and made meaning with my life, the way I follow through.

Interpretive matrix and template

While most of the Nepalese women teachers I encountered spoke in English and their words (utterances and gestures), selectivities, and silences speak powerfully for themselves, an understanding of the grassroots and academic movements I have attempted to bridge above and beyond the "desk-sound" in my life became necessary. I focussed strongly on the process and power of active listening I had learned in the company of significant teachers. These were reciprocally recognized by Nepalese women teachers as most significant in gaining their permission and their trust to produce and reproduce metaphorical snapshots of the work they do with their lives.

I realized many times during this study that not everyone has been taught or is willing to extend the kind of active participation in listening that I take for granted and that what Nepalese women teachers responded to, active attention, humility of the receptive ear in response to the speaker, "will put one in the frame of mind where minds can meet" (Lightning, 1992). I assumed it was understood that there will be reciprocal effort in terms of time and space to think mutually with the speaker as would also be required by the interpreter of her text. This was to be a challenge in terms of both the Nepalese and Canadian interpretive communities.

A male high-caste Hindu (Brahmin, Nepalese), Assistant Campus Chief responsible for teacher education at a regional campus in Nepal, who helped me gain entry points into outlying village schools and to his regional campus, and two male principals (a Brahmin and an expatriate) did not really understand why I would want to listen to young women becoming teachers and by speaking to "ethnic daughters" of Nepal. Although they could not articulate a coherent argument against me, they still managed to create a mood that served for some time to sustain their dismissive image as powerful. I was encouraged to speak to older women teachers, and even then, they intimated, it was not clear what the older women could tell me and to never mind wasting time *listening* to young women. I was told on a number of occasions by various senior bureaucrats in Nepal that young girls who are becoming teachers would not have anything to say. I was also told that female teachers in the rural villages were little better than illiterate themselves.

My interpretation was guided by negotiation and movability between and amongst male networks and female skeins of threads (so what do you do, "knit one, purl two"): I relied on Carl Urion's (1991) explication of principles to listen and to interpret stories of teachers and on feminist aesthetic in terms of principles for interpreting and for pulling on connecting threads amongst and between women teachers in Casey's (1993) and Middleton's (1993) color coding procedures. I was aware in the context of Nepal of the symbolic color red (Pandey, 1991).

My way to the interpretive process was through what Walter Lightning (1992) of Cree tradition calls a "compassionate mind." I encountered and have continued to learn through this "mindset" in many settings and with a diverse group of dedicated teachers who operationalize such a way to listen and to interpret stories that go beyond the reach of the times and spaces we call school. It was my work (paid and unpaid) as a combined Drama/English teacher with the Edmonton Inner City Drama Project in Alex Taylor and Sacred Heart elementary schools, at an inner city Boys and Girls Club, and at W.P. Wagner vocational high school that helped me to move and to negotiate in graduate school having begun by listening to the Native community and to displaced persons, to refugees, immigrants, and subsistence level communities, and to families on the move.

I took great pains to listen, to transcribe, and to interpret Nepalese women teachers' stories. I was able to do almost all of the transcription, myself. I included "uhs" and pauses, and long intakes of breath or sighs, laughs, the shedding of tears, the beginnings of words, the uncertainty with English, and so forth. When and where translation assistance became necessary, in two interviews, one with a mountain village Gurung teacher, and the other, in a group interview session with three teachers, I acted as a guide. In terms of the interview with a mountain village Gurung teacher, I was accompanied in the field by an American Peace Corps worker who was fluent in Nepali and by her low-caste Nepalese "tailor" husband. The Nepalese woman teacher spoke in English, in Gurung, and in Nepali. I asked my translators and guides to brief me in the field on what was said and I included their English translations.

When I returned to Canada, I instructed a Nepalese colleague and fellow doctoral student who volunteered his assistance (and who was paid) in the way I had begun and I asked him in a similar fashion to fill in the blanks and to re-translate portions of the tape into English. He replicated this method of translation in the three-teacher interview. During this interview, I asked questions in English and the teachers responded in Nepali. One of the teachers could speak in English but she wanted to answer in Nepali as well and she provided the translated questions to the other two teachers at the time of the interview.

What I found most interesting about these encounters and the translations is that what I heard in the field was not necessarily translated in the Brahmin translations done in Canada. For example, at one point, my doctoral colleague used the term "inculcated." This did not fit either with what the Peace Corps worker and her husband had heard and translated, nor did it fit with the setting, the sights and sounds that moved me over and beyond the "desk-sound." The Brahmin translations tended to reposition the women's voices in an academic language which smoothed over their own meanings. This is not meant in any way as a criticism of ability, or a refutation of care and commitment, for these translators are very able teachers, and my friends, and we are all learning about this new area of work on women as teachers' voices.

These were just some of the "harsh interruptions" I encountered in the female domain (Middleton, 1993). I remembered what I was thinking at the time, places where and when

I lost my sociologically indoctrinated agenda. And I was grateful. The dominant discourse makes allowances for a very small portion of the range that moves us beyond the "surface" story and often "contains a 'key' or a 'clue' to unlock the metaphor" (Urion, 1991). Anything above or beyond this limited range, "the text, and the things one has to know about the performance of it for others" (Urion, 1991) I might have been required to exorcise from Nepalese women teachers' narratives, to turn them into highly reconstructed texts. But we now know there is a price to be paid within the terms set by the four horsemen (i.e., human capital, modernisation, dependency, and underdevelopment). I was told there exists an older generation with disciplinary and theoretical background very different from my own, and although supportive of this research project, an assumption of theirs was that the Canadian audience could not understand, nor manage to occupy the spaces that held the meaning of what was being said by Nepalese women teachers. Further since these women were teachers, they should have an English translation equivalent to their status in North American society.

This position differs from that of the university interpretive community of scholars as I have come to know them in the interregnum. There exists an international/intergenerational scope of teachers and teacher-researchers who respond to current conditions and who converged on the mythical *assemblée de cuisine*. Meetings and seminars took place around various "kitchen tables," in school and out of school, both in Nepal and in Canada, where the process and power of actively listening to the authority of Nepalese women teachers' accounts was unmistakable. But I think it is significant to debunk a myth about the literate, academic community: While higher education seems to overly stress divergent positions, like any other community, there are those who converge in working relationships and who acknowledge things get done via collaboration.

Biographical terrain

As a trained actress of worker, peasant/artisan background, who has worked professionally, and aesthetically in terms of my involvement with feminist theatre and literary groups in Canada, it was my inclination to read aloud as a way to interpret what I had created: "highly constructed texts" (Popular Memory Group, 1982). I have had a very good training for catching the nuances and subtleties of the extraordinary in the conversational range.

My interview skills were buttressed by a journalism diploma and by having worked as a reporter for a largely rural and small community-based newspaper in Alberta. I listened to and recorded the stories of many farm and city women and numerous other "strong characters." I studied journalism with a New York police-beat reporter who migrated across the United States and eventually turned up in Canada. Here was a real live "beatnik" in the heart of a conservative province who wore only black clothes and who had holes in the soles of his cowboy boots. While at college, he invited his journalism students to follow him around to listen to his short stories in the "magic realist" mode at coffee houses in Calgary. And he continuously encouraged me in my desire to go on and to become an actress and to maintain my ethos: "Never do anything you feel goes against that grain."

Trained in the performing arts to act, react, and to move upon a sea of grain and grass, I moved on to the Rocky Mountains during three summers spent at the Banff Centre, I moved back to the prairies to do a combined Drama/English B.A.; in-between, I gained my Equity card as a professional actress in Calgary and Edmonton, and I was inducted in Rudy Wiebe's senior creative writing classes at the University of Alberta. All of this combined to set up a momentum with me to take opportunities that arose fortuitously or in an imaginative/creative mode (i.e., serendipitously). I was asked to join the Department of Educational Foundations (recently retitled the Department of Educational Policy Studies) while I was studying in an After Degree (B.Ed.) program at the University of Alberta. The recruiter was the chairman at that time, Dr. Robert J. Carney; we discovered we had fathers who both worked for the Canadian Pacific Railroad and many of the same interests. Dr. Carney commissioned me to write a play that was performed by graduate teaching assistants to take the place of a lecture on The Manitoba School Question: an important event in the history of Canadian education that led to education being offered in local languages.[5] I began to study for a Master's in International/Intercultural Education with Dr. Carl Urion (Métis). My interest in popular theatre or "people's theatre" (Schulz, 1990b) led me to write about the way expressive arts are vital to the landscape of learning. My Master's thesis drew connecting lines across a number of imaginative seascapes: From the prairies, I wrote about story circles, English as a Second Language, and the making of theatre at The Saskatoon Native Survival School. I then moved across mountains to explore the Pacific coast of Canada and British Columbia Native communities. From that vantage point, I looked toward the Atlantic to the Northern Inuit community of Labrador, back across the Pacific to people's theatre during the Cultural Revolution in China, and also popular theatre as a way of building community in Bangladesh.

Access

After approximately 2 months of dealing with the complex and sometimes resistant bureaucracy of Nepal, I was granted permission to conduct this study. The unexpected amount of time it took to gain nontourist (research) visas had to do with the fact that my accompanying "spouse" was male. I was told on numerous occasions by government bureaucrats that it would have been easier if, as a woman, I had been the "spouse," and my partner, Don, the "researcher"; intriguingly enough I was told there was never any problem for my one-year-old son to gain a nontourist visa. On March 12, all three of us finally arrived at the place where everything was set to begin, and it was somewhere near a *pipal* tree in a village square where we were told we might meet and where we first did meet with the Assistant Campus Chief of a regional campus of Tribhuvan University.

Data collection

The written documents on which I relied for this project include the assessment studies of the women of Nepal, for instance, the series of volumes on women in Nepal, published under the general title *The Status of Women in Nepal* (see Acharya & Bennett, 1981). This series contains background material (five monographs in Volume 1) and an excellent series of field studies on women in separate regions of Nepal (several monographs in Volume 2). Papanek (1984) suggests that these monographs make important empirical and methodological contributions to the new scholarship on women from the point of view of the women themselves. Most recently, the extensive USAID (United State's Agency for International Development) survey of the status of women in Nepal (e.g., Acharya, 1979; Acharya & Bennett, 1981, see also 1983), and its framework whose theoretical concerns are with female status, has come under critical review. This critique is not specific to Nepal; it is also inherent "in most of the discussion of 'the situation of women in Bangladesh'," whereby "power is referred to only obliquely" (White, 1992, p. 23). "Getting women out to work, then, becomes the key to raising female status" (White, 1992, p. 25). White's critique examines "particular instances, rather than general questions, which tend to produce conventional answers" that lend themselves to "a passive" or even to a "grim" picture of women: "None of this results from the careful exploration of actual cases...and the room for manoeuvre that their members have, let alone these people's own estimations of what is desirable" (White, 1992, p. 25).

Faced as I was with competing models, I began with three data collection methods: 1) written questionnaires to 112 young women teaching students at one regional campus and to 13 in-service teachers at another regional campus. The life-history survey concerned their educational and vocational careers in a life-line perspective adapted to the frame of a questionnaire used by an IDRC-funded graduate student with nursing students in Nepal, 2) interviews on life histories with 13 women teachers, and 3) I also kept a log of field notes.

Questionnaires

For the first part of this study, a bilingual questionnaire was developed in Canada and in Nepal. In Canada a doctoral graduate and fellow IDRC-funded researcher, Dr. Linda Ogilvie (1991, 1993), devised a questionnaire and I followed her lead. Her experiences throughout Nepal suggest that women nursing students often prefer to answer questions in

English rather than in Nepali. Belatedly, I found the opposite to be true for nursing students' courses are in English and student teachers' courses are in Nepali. Hence I had to have the questionnaires translated and reproduced in Nepal. Members of CERID were a great help in translating the questionnaire into Nepali and in gaining permission from the Assistant Campus Chief.

I distributed 112 questionnaires at a regional campus of Tribhuvan University; members of CERID assisted in the pilot-test of 13 questionnaires to in-service teachers at another regional campus, and I distributed questionnaires to the women teachers I interviewed.

I made a decision to try to do a total survey of the women student teachers at the regional campus if the numbers were not too large. I had difficulty getting these numbers from the Assistant Campus Chief. He did not respond to my question about the numbers of women student teachers. And the numbers he quoted to me changed. With his permission, I gained access to a number of classes at the campus and I distributed my questionnaires. These questionnaires were taken away overnight and some of them trickled in a few days later or they were returned in batches as they were collected by the professors who passed them along to me. The Assistant Campus Chief said there were around 100 female students and then after I had gotten back 112 he said there were more. He also kept asking me if I had enough. I wondered about the whole notion of total population: what would be gained and what would be lost in terms of the rapport I had established with the Assistant Campus Chief. He said there were more female student teachers but hesitated to tell me the exact numbers. I realized I was getting caught up in numbers. I began to put aside the idea of interrogating, in terms of numbers, and as analysis deepened, I put aside even more of the concepts from traditional academic sociology.

It was my intention to begin with a "life-line approach" with South-East Asian women for the purposes of developing North-South understanding, cooperation, and collaboration. This approach had been pilot-tested by the University of Umea, Department of Education, Sweden, in 1983, under the title "Western Educational Ideology—Eastern Social Change" (Umea Universitet Pedagogiska Institutionen Weed-Projectet, 1986). The life-line approach is considered a valuable tool: 1) It addresses the need of more systematic, comparative research on the ways in which women of different geographical, social, and cultural groups were and are able to take advantage of educational opportunities and how their life patterns were and are being changed as a result; 2) it combines macro- and micro-analyses; 3) it focuses on the complex interplay of education-work-homemaking and takes into account the fundamental differences between the life situation for males and females and their relative abilities to take advantage of educational opportunities; and 4) it is a methodology which at first, I was led to expect, requires very little verbalisation in a questionnaire or during an interview situation. This did not turn out to be the case in Nepal.

The women who were asked to fill in the questionnaire indicated on a time line when they had been working full time or part time outside the home, when they had been studying, and when they had considered themselves jobless. This was the least productive aspect of the questionnaire. I was not always invited by the male professors of the classes to explain in greater detail about the life-line to the young women, and as I felt I was taking up valuable class time I was respectful of these professors' limitations imposed upon my study. The students were also asked to indicate on the same time line changes in marital status, childbirth, and future plans concerning education and work.

Had I had the time and the space to interview these women student teachers that would have been my own way to begin. I began with questionnaires because I wanted to know whether the practising women teachers I would be interviewing were exceptional and whether or not their views fit with the next group of women coming up behind. I liked the idea of a life-line drawn on a sheet of paper because I have a very visual orientation and I thought it would be meaningful for women to see and to represent their lives visually. My visual orientation lends itself more to "trees," "circles," or "spirals" and to metaphor as a way to image life-line perspective. But what I realized in the field was that these young women had stories to tell, their oral traditions were expressed best in metaphor, and had I simply asked them to tell me the story of how they came to be teachers I think I would have opened up that possibility for them. As it was they had to write tiny snapshots of their lives in answer to too many questions transferred from Ogilvie's (1991, 1993) questionnaire and other questions developed for interviewing women (see Appendices B, C, & D) designed to obtain a total life history into which detailed information about their own and their extended family's educational involvement could be placed.

Since I was never allowed much time to go over the life-line with them, many of them did not fill it in. They were more accustomed to writing. Even so many of the questions were left unanswered. The women chose the questions they understood, had time for, or desired to answer.

My being on campus was scrutinized by the majority of male professors and male students. I was followed to and from classes. Once when I sat on a step to record field notes in my journal, I was immediately surrounded by about 30 young men and one of them began to read what I was writing over my shoulder out loud to the others. I also felt badly that I had not administered questionnaires to these young men and I mentioned this to them in the classes that their stories are just as significant but that I was there to gather stories from women. The questionnaires became a point of interest with the male professors who glanced at the first few pages, seeing that the women had not filled out those (life-line) pages, they lost interest. Their response told me it was not a very fruitful endeavor to pose questions to young women and so forth and what they did not chance to read was written on the margins, on backs of pages, and between the lines. Had I set up an office it would have been just as closely scrutinized and I wonder now about the attention it would have drawn to those young women who came and went for interview.

The questionnaires offered a bit of a smoke screen and provided me with an official function on that campus. For officialdom is recognized by its heavy-handedness in terms of paper and the questionnaires were a weighty lot that took much patience to get reproduced in a context where electricity is variable. Even collating the questionnaires on campus was a chore. I had to stand behind a window where many men gathered to make comment and some came into the office and watched as I and a Gurung friend collated. My Gurung friend left the campus as early as possible because of the comments he had heard. When I returned to Canada, I was told by a doctoral student who had taught there that it was a highly politicized place and there had been kidnappings of students, male and female, of particular political persuasion and that he, himself, had been held hostage.

I am glad that I went there a bit naïvely, I was excited and happy, even though I couldn't help but notice the political slogans in Nepali and "down with imperialism" in English on the surrounding fence. Seeing the female student teachers filling out the questionnaires in small groups seated outside in the shade (I could watch through the staffroom window) gave me courage. And I had Neelam Basnet's encouragement ringing in my ears not to get discouraged and not to give up. Some of the women student teachers wrote personal notes to me on the questionnaires thanking me for coming. Two of the Nepalese women teachers I interviewed wondered out loud if the student teachers would fill out the questionnaires properly or if they would "spoil" them. And I am grateful to note that this was not the case. The student teachers did not spoil the questionnaires, the questionnaires were the problem that turned out to be fortuitous.

The last memory I hold of gathering the questionnaires from the campus was being accompanied by my partner, as feeling a bit too vulnerable that day I had asked him to accompany me. A young French man had been beaten up by some of the Nepalese students for asking too many questions. The Assistant Campus Chief said that the Nepalese students had been reprimanded. But I felt it was becoming unstable and since the leader of the Communist party had just died in a reported jeep accident, rumours abounded. A Nepalese woman, who lived in the vicinity and had experienced the students in violent protest climbing over her back wall, told me that people believed that he had been murdered. One rumor was about a suspicious American woman journalist hounding him for an interview. The stories became more fantastic every day and that one story was too close to home. I made a joke but I was feeling the political nature of my inquiry: I was just waiting for that story to turn into one about a woman, who sometimes pushed a bright blue stroller on campus and around the vicinity, for that would have been me and my one-year-old son who sometimes accompanied me.

In summing up, I think that the life-line and the questions were based far too much on an overarching framework that transfers women's life offering into life-line graphs or other hierarchies of numbers. It was necessary to break much further away from that conceptual mold.

Life-history interviews

I told everyone I knew that I wanted to speak with Nepalese women teachers. "In qualitative research demographics have little significance" (Morse, 1991), and it is necessary to find more descriptive methods of describing the respondents and the researcher and the context (interaction and response). In one school I gave a short talk to a staffroom of Nepalese teachers telling them the exact nature of what I was interested in—the story of how they had come to be teachers—and, then, I allowed them time to think it over before setting up interviews. I found that this was the better method. As well, less formal and more private settings and times set aside for less formal encounters chosen by the women teachers added another measure of openness. I was encouraged through CERID to speak with a particular teacher in the vicinity in which I had decided to make my fieldwork "home-base." For the most part, the teachers I encountered spoke English; however, I also continued to work toward language acquisition in Nepal. I had hoped and was able to interview women with membership in Gurung, Rai, and other ethnic groups; however I found predominantly that they identified themselves in metaphors and as "Nepalese" rather than as members of these ethnic groups.

The interviews with the 13 Nepalese women teachers were audio-taped, and analysis (transcription and translation) was begun in the field.

These interviews lasted approximately one to three hours. The interviews were autobiographical, focusing on the women's stories of how they came to be teachers. Initially, I planned to use an interview schedule designed to obtain a total life history into which more detailed information about occupational involvement and family life could be placed. This interview schedule was untenable and proved unnecessary as the Nepalese women teachers' stories covered these areas in ways that were important to them. They were always pressed for time and I respected their obligations and responsibilities.

Women teachers' personal narratives are essential primary documents, and these documents do not exist for Nepal, as in many other parts of the world. I was dealing in this study with the question of whose lives have been made exemplary and what impact on our understanding of the human experience of becoming a teacher the inclusion of different life experiences of women in Nepal would have (see also Personal Narratives Group, 1989). This may well yield greater explanatory power oriented toward progressive ends.

Two methods were considered as a potential starting point. One was Casey's (1988, 1993), "Tell me the story of your life," a challenge that she followed by silence. This was the most open-ended way she could invent to elicit the selectivities of the women themselves, a goal she had set for herself after reading the work of the Popular Memory Group. On the other hand, Nelson (1992), as a starting point, relied heavily on the life-history interview guide developed by Sherna Gluck (1977a, 1977b) and on the questions developed by the Project at the University of Michigan (1977) for interviewing women. This method was designed to obtain a total life history into which more detailed information about occupational involvement could be placed (Nelson, 1992, p. 169; see Appendix B). Nelson (1992) writes: "As I became more certain about my own interests I expanded those areas of questioning which seemed to be offering the most insight" (p. 169). And I followed her lead. As a starting point I relied quite heavily on the life-history interview guide and questions developed for interviewing women. But as these interviews were designed to be free flowing and open-ended, to allow the Nepalese women teachers to tell their stories in their own words, I began to direct questions only as necessary to make sure that specific areas were covered and even this became less useful. As Casey (1993) discovered in this method of research you cannot have it both ways. *Guru-heart* could not make the scheduled interview and she passed along to another teacher a hand-written story. She had been worried about being left out. When I scheduled another interview I found that my questions were much too interruptive. I felt I was becoming a "privileged friend" and we engaged in a two-hour long conversation about the shared problems of women as teachers moving into leadership roles in both Canada and in Nepal. She wanted to know if some of the things that had happened to her ever happened in Canada. I was invited to lunch by her and another teacher to which I brought my son and a young Gurung friend who also was thinking about becoming a teacher.

I learned increasingly to begin with the question: "Tell me the story of how you came to be a teacher?" And I only asked questions that came up in the context of our interaction and with questions that had evolved over the course of having interviewed a diverse group of women teachers. Life history interviews are marked by conversational negotiation.

In another case, three teachers, who were very pressed for time, agreed to be interviewed together and I found this to be particularly informative. I had met one woman at a regional college campus and there she had filled out a questionnaire while attending an upgrading course in the morning before her schoolteaching day started. These classes at the campus were held during morning campus: early in the day between 7 and 9 a.m. She had asked me then if I could come to her school, and when I finally arrived at her school, some weeks later, she was very surprised and happy to see me. Even though my Nepali was not adequate, and these three teachers were answering my English questions in Nepali, we enjoyed an uncommonly "close" encounter. I had to listen to their gestures and read their faces, and so I laughed when they laughed, and sighed and nodded my head in agreement (when one of the teachers provided a very brief translation in English for me, and also translated my questions to two others who spoke little or no English). I was not really surprised when after reading the complete translation in Canada, one teacher had turned to another teacher and asked if she thought I could understand. I was encouraged by how these three women had provided a choral counterpart to my study. Each woman's story adding a little more to the next, and I was allowed to listen as if, momentarily, to a part of their supportive and "privileged" friendship. At one point, one of the teachers had stated in Nepali that she would answer for the others about a day in her life. I had asked these teachers as I had asked others to tell me everything they had done yesterday from the moment they woke up until the moment they went to sleep. It was a Sunday, and so these teachers began to talk about the significance of Saturday, the "off-day," they said in English. I almost stopped because I realized that I had not asked the other teachers about their "off-days" and, yet, the "off-day" was revealing. It became the "*code word*" (Smillie & Murphy, 1986) or "password" (Bakhtin's notion, in Todorov, 1984), with meaning for all of us, and the subject of discussion. Since my Nepali was not adequate enough to comprehend at that time what this one teacher had said about speaking for all, I then turned to the other teachers, and they continued, each woman, in her own way, adding to this "conversation circle" more and more work and activity to her "off-day."

Clandinin recognized how even given the language constraints this was a "conversation circle" (personal communication, 1994). My understanding of conversation or "story circles" method emerged from my Master's thesis research exploring the work and experience of the Saskatoon Native Survival School's "disciplined and innovative pedagogy for teaching literacy through storytelling" (Schulz, 1990b, p. 253; see also Smillie & Murphy, 1986). And this method has been influenced by Freire (1970) and Boal (1979), "both of whom have developed methods of language teaching which assume that [oppressed people] suffer within a 'culture of silence'" (Schulz, 1990b, p. 253; Smillie & Murphy, 1986, p. 14). In this case, I played and took on the role of the illiterate one.

Relying on what I had learned about the story circles method, I became comfortable with the group and "less afraid of making a mistake in an unfamiliar language" (Smillie & Murphy, in Schulz, 1990b, p. 255).

Contemporary scholars recognize the interview situation or "active listening" that takes place during storytelling depends on an interaction (Frank, 1979, 1985; Langness & Frank, 1981; Lightning, 1992; Urion, 1991; Watson & Watson-Franke, 1985). Patai (1988) explains it in the following way:

> Telling one's life story involves a rationalization of the past as it is projected and leads into an inevitable present. And, indeed, a particular version of one's life story may become an essential component of one's sense of identity. From the enormous store of memories and possible response the interview evokes, the person interviewed selects or simply finds available particular themes, incidents, and recollections, which are then communicated in a particular way. At another moment in her life, or faced with a different interlocutor, quite a different story, with different emphases, might well emerge....The interviewer's responses, of disapproval or approval, of encouragement or indifference, of more intense listening to some themes than to others, without a doubt play a role, but the different stories elicited by the same interviewer depend, in the end, upon the interviewees. To situate the researcher at the center of the universe is a mistake. By doing so we are once again overvaluing our role as individuals "in charge." (p. 147)

Field notes

Anthropological field notes were kept as a running log written at various times of each day. I occasionally spoke about what I had observed into a tape recorder and transcribed these into my field notes at the end of the day. Any day's field notes might contain fragments of conversation, description of festival days celebrated while I was in Nepal, questions I would like to ask, observations on street scenes, using the telephone, learning how to negotiate the use of taxis, autorickshaws, buses, where to buy gas canisters, ice for the cooler, life at campus, words my son was learning from our Gurung and Brahmin neighbors, how I got around from place to place, a running calendar of my activities and appointments, correct spellings and pronunciation of names, a detailed description of a wedding I attended, a pencil sketch of a Brahmin son's initiation rite observed over the fence of our rented quarters to which my son was taken by Nepalese friends, addresses and phone numbers, business cards and paraphernalia stapled to pages along with whole or partial interview transcripts with marginal comments to read over and over again, comments on books I had read or faxes received, expressions of personal feelings. And these feelings ranged from fear of the brown snake that was on the loose in the neighbors' *bisee* (water buffalo) stall and the great big brown frog who that same day poked his head through a hole in our bedroom wall, to awe at observing the monsoon clouds gather and swell, the first glimpse of mountains at dawn, the white horses who grazed in the meadow just beyond our front gate, I wrote recipes for Nepalese dishes I tried, I tried to recreate all these new sensations, I wrote poems, the beginnings of short stories, outlines for the dissertation. I tried to recreate some of the "musty, smoky, spicy evocations of people and places" (Lederman, 1990, p. 73). I tried to make sense of my reaction to the drunken neighbor beating his wife because of a family squabble over the Canadian equivalent of a dime, and my response as I called out over the fence to "stop that immediately," and the way she looked up at me, her purse and her clothes thrown on top of her as she lay quietly against a tree, and when I next saw her and she gave me a look of what I took to be growing affection. I toyed with words, images, ideas, theoretical fragments as passwords and code words to join conversations in unfamiliar settings.

The special value of field notes "is their capacity to unsettle, to cause a repositioning of existing boundaries and centers" (Lederman, 1990, p. 75). I followed Lederman and others in Sanjek's (1990a) edited volume on *Fieldnotes: The Making of Anthropology* who encouraged various kinds of writing and writing routines in the field.

Data analysis

I also recognized that I had done more reading on the contradictions and/or differences between and amongst women as teachers than on the similarities or points of intersection and consensus. Still, I believed that the kind of analysis I could construct would be of value if I was as open as possible with the women about my identity and theoretical orientation and the use I would make of their words. I must say I went a bit overboard in being as explicit about every possible problematic, and Nepalese women teachers, and most loudly *Guru-lekhika*, told me to quit dithering about these naïve and cynical details and to enjoy the obvious camaraderie. And since this is the way I used to approach human beings as teachers, I began to see that women as teachers, as teacher-researchers, experience deep entanglements "in current conflicts over theory, methodology, and politics" in the "desk-bound" spaces of academia which sometimes seem almost to disappear around the kitchen table and in the field (Casey, 1993, p. 11; Grumet, 1994; see the Popular Memory Group [1982] for what Casey [1993] says is "the most important discussion of oral history research"; White, 1992). It was women teachers who helped me to delve further into the notion that "isolationism breeds cynicism" (e.g., Margaret Haughey, personal communication, 1995), who helped me to see in my own further education "a power relationship between theory and experience, and one consequence is that women are not only alienated from theory but also from experience itself" (Stanley & Wise, 1983, p. 163; see also Middleton, 1993).

Nepalese women teachers helped the process of collaborative theorizing by their theoretical and methodological sophistication in dealing with current conditions and restructuring in schools in Nepal in the "incredibly complex genre" (Urion, 1991) of their oral traditions; a number of these teachers had experienced migrations to other countries and had made comparisons in terms of their own story and in terms of the stories of their extended families; one teacher had been given the scholarship to work and further her teaching skills overseas; another teacher had already been writing short stories and songs and through the techniques of revising and reinterpreting this material had developed in literary and/or grassroots feminist theorizing; another teacher had been involved in other university research projects where she had been involved in academic theorizing; and one teacher made note of her role as a cooperating teacher filling in the blanks for the student teachers about what was left out of their learning at campus and what they needed to make the transition to work in school. Like the beginning and student teachers, these women told and wrote stories aware of their own pedagogical impulses and directions and how these developed in relation to older teachers and the next generation of students and how this continued throughout their development as a way "to understand the circumstances of one another's possibilities" (Middleton, 1993, p. 35).

As Middleton (1993) pointed out in her own work, "this helped in avoiding what Liz Stanley and Sue Wise (1983) have termed 'conceptual imperialism'" (p. 69). What I "discovered" was that though I had been forcefully indoctrinated in an attempt at "conceptual imperialism" in home and school, I had already many times in my life managed to work within the relational assumption that all autobiographical memory is true and, hence, I was still working to articulate, and integrate that significance into the future. My life and its story, too, had a purpose that was still unfolding its potential.

Conceptualizing progress in active listening

The way to interpret stories and the way to measure progression in coming to understand stories in oral traditions is unfamiliar to many people. Urion (1991) has observed several principles of how to listen and to interpret stories.

I found some of the same principles came to mind when considering how to listen to and to interpret the stories told by women teachers, which also would "enable the women being interviewed to assist in the analysis of their own tape-recorded life histories and to try to avoid imposing alien constructions on their experiences" (Middleton, 1993, p. 69). Middleton (1993) was interested in gaining New Zealand women teachers' reactions to five categories and she underlined transcriptions of life histories in five different colors that corresponded to sociological concepts: pink—family (parents, siblings, other "significant" relatives, social class, religion, and ethnicity); orange—sexuality (menstruation, sexual relationships, sexual morality, marriage, and motherhood); green—career (ambitions, influences, paid work, and achievements whether paid or unpaid); yellow—formal education (primary school, secondary school, university/teachers college, other); and, blue—feminism/politicization (activities, influences, e.g., reading, role models). When I tried to do the same I came up with colors on top of other colors: not rainbows of illumination to give back to Nepalese women teachers but mud. And Middleton (1993) herself has recounted how as a sociological doctoral study in New Zealand in the 1980s, her "research was brought into being within particular power relations" (p. 61).

I found in Canada, as Casey (1993) did in her work in the late 1980s in the United States, moving into the 1990s, that the actual practice of listening to interpret women teachers' stories "(mercifully) never came even close to...analytical neatness" (p. 17). Urion (1991) points out: "Stories are not just 'texts,' or narratives that deal with sequences of events in a linear progression."

One major reason was also the question around which I increasingly oriented the interviews: "Tell me the story of how you came to be a teacher." While I had brought along comprehensive sets of questions employed by others in interviewing women, I had found that question the most extraordinarily successful even as it eventually added to the challenge "when faced with the job of analyzing what were, as a result, very unrule-ly manuscripts" (Casey, 1993, p. 17). Casey (1993) color coded three categories: personal, social, and work relations, as well as any references to religion. Once again I found it unbelievably difficult to separate out these relations in Nepalese women teachers' narratives, as Casey (1993) herself did when she tried to write about these categories "separately, they seemed to be hopelessly entangled" (p. 27). And faced with the challenge I encountered and striving to establish "my own analytic gestalt" as Casey (1993) did, I decided to look for metaphors and for repetition.

I must say that I did not go to Nepal looking to define "the indescribable subtleties of a primary female" educative relationship, the one that for daughters begins with their mothers, "fraught" as it is "with cultural and emotional overtones" (Jussim, 1989). I had no metaphor of what was being evaded in the dominant discourse as a guide, but I had my own story of who I am and how I was making sense of my life and my practices. It took time and genuine curiosity to find an interpretive community. I measured my progress in the sharing of stories of how I was making sense, and "theory in the shape of research papers, philosophical books, other teachers' and students' stories," in the networks and skeins that intersected at key points within the Nepalese and Canadian community "were all used to help" (Clandinin et al., 1993b).

I wrote Chapter One and I read it aloud in two different settings at the University of Alberta. Following the practice I had established in my life and in the field, I sent this chapter to the Nepalese women teachers for their comment. What I received in return was encouragement to continue: For instance, *Guru-heart* replied,

> Thank you very much for thinking of me, caring of me and encouraging me in my career....for taking so much trouble and being so kind to write to me....I feel as if I was granted scholarship....I appreciate very much for what you have done for me and feel very proud to be acquainted with you as a friend. (personal communication, 24 November 1993)

I also sent along books and other information that had been requested by the teachers, it was to this, to me, to my visit, about my welfare and the welfare of my family that they directed their interest. Our conversations continue as extension of the relationship begun in the field and it is my hope as much as it was Nepalese women teachers' hope that I can find avenues and scope for it to be extended in the future. I have excerpted from their letters in Chapter 5 (p. 315).

This study employed a critical view of socialization that depicts the socialization process as contradictory and dialectical, as collective as well as individual, and as situated within the broader context of institutions, society, culture, gender, and history, and, at the same time, seeks to redress the unequal power relations between researchers and the researched (Zeichner & Gore, 1990). Like Casey (1988), I, too, eventually derived socialization patterns from my interaction with Nepalese women teachers, "patterns from the texts themselves," and "analytical categories were created in a process of interaction among the narratives themselves, and between the narratives and scholarly texts" and the larger social world of oral and written philosophical traditions "judged to have similar concerns and emphases" (p. 80). Given my imaginative and critical scope and creative momentum I was moving toward "relational analysis" as "the key notion," as it was in both the Popular Memory Group (1982) and the Bakhtin Circle:

> What is most important is neither the "objective" (structure) nor the "subjective" (culture), but the relationship between them; neither past nor present, but the relationship between them; neither dominant memory nor commonplace understandings, but the relationship between them; neither the personal/individual nor large-scale changes, but the relationship between them. (Casey, 1993, p. 12)

Classes of stories

Crites (1971) and Urion (1991) both write how there are several classes of stories: for example, sacred and profane (i.e., historical). Only twice in the ancient history of Nepal have women been granted the time and space to work to gain the authority, to engage in discourse and to become expert in the performance of Vedic rites, grammar, and branches of study which were the means by which the Vedic literature, and hence culture, was transmitted (Joshi & Anderson, 1994). Urion (1991) calls attention to the time it takes "to acquire the principles for the interpretation of the [sacred class of] stories."

In Nepal, as in Bangladesh, there is this dominant metaphorical view, "intermeshed with fear and distrust of women's powers of sexuality and fertility....the Hindu cult of *Shakti*...recognizes the feminine principle as the source of power, appearing variously as mother (as Shashthi) and destroyer (as [Shiva or] Kali)" (White, 1992, p. 22). As mediators of the sacred and the profane, the stories women have who become teachers in Nepal have "a centrality and community significance very different from the common picture of men as the family representative to the outside world" (White, 1992, p. 154, on women in Bangladesh; see also Bennett, 1983, on Nepalese [high-caste] women). As teachers, women demonstrate "the multiplicity of possible readings and so the falsity of claiming a single 'traditional' view, of whatever complexion" (White, 1992, p. 149).

For instance, in Nepal, Neelam Basnet (1991, p. 122) writes that "moral, religious and social service education should be incorporated in the curricula," and she suggests "Saraswati" as a vital figure for discursive integration. However, *Guru-lekhika*, a mother of a daughter, like Neelam Basnet, and also like her having been displaced at an early age from a mother, and mothers,[6] through death and tragic events beyond her control, told me how unsuitable are the goddesses to be worshipped. *Guru-lekhika* speaks from the position of a different daughter, one that is not comfortably aligned with her late Rana father, and one she has described as, "the King belongs to the same caste like me [but] I don't feel secure, you know. Because I have seen the life of my mother and all" (life-history interview, 29 April 1993). She is disapproving of these tales that speak of *Saraswati,* whose Brahmin father desired her; that speak of *Parvati* who was given in marriage at a tender age to a 70-year-old man; that speak of love in the story of *Ram-Sita,* where he abandons his female love interest. *Guru-lekhika* said that the Brahmin (high caste) males were "cunning to have written them up so," and "just like people write up history, we teach the gods/goddesses, not commenting on their defects" (from journal entry and conversation in a village tea shop, away from the school, 29 April 1993).

In my 1993 life-history questionnaire, two young daughters of Nepal studying to become teachers spoke out about their similar concerns with regard to socialization, which I almost missed in the accumulation of great heaps of "data":

> When I was studying in secondary school I felt that we are backward because of the social discrimination and religious prejudices. Those who were the preachers of the religion dominated the others....
>
> Because we were from different castes, and religions, we spoke different languages and had different living style.

According to Bakhtin, "this stratification and diversity of speech will spread wider and penetrate to even deeper levels" (in Holquist, 1981, p. xix).

White (1992) points out how "some apologists maintain the religious founders have been misunderstood, and were actually far more positive about women than they are usually presented" (p. 149). Thus, a traditionalist position may also offer "a platform for a programme of contemporary reform," for instance, Brijbhushan (1980) "rereads Islamic texts and tradition to support women's property rights, the end of polygamy and gender disparities in divorce laws and rethinking on child custody, plus revival of payments for women at marriage" (White, 1992, p. 149). Also, "and very creatively, contemporary feminists have made significant moves towards drawing out the principles of female power and activity hidden in the dominant religious traditions" (White, 1992, pp. 149, 164f; see Liddle & Joshi [1986/1989] on Hinduism; Smith & Haddad [1982] or El Sadaawi [1982] on Islam; Ruether [1983] on Christianity; and Gross [1993] on Buddhism).

Following Casey (1993), Lightning (1992), Middleton (1993), Urion (1991), and Young (1989), I have included my own autobiographical statements and cultural framework of meaning throughout this text for understanding classes of stories and the relationship between them.

Development of a literature

While doing fieldwork, attention is focused on "taking down" reality as we perceive it; while composing and editing life histories and field notes focus attention on putting reality back again into some form that will communicate (Plath, 1990). The context of presentation, or viewing the content of some piece of information in a new context, comes into play (Plath, 1990). According to Patai (1988), "much of the discomfort of both writers and critics of oral history" is a result of a commitment to "objectivity," an objectivity that is challenged and threatened by the complexities of the interview process itself and its "subsequent transformation of spoken words into written texts" (p. 147). In other words,

> ethnographic writing is all about directing readers toward novel modes of seeing the world (an effect achieved by maintaining authorial control, one way or another). Our claim to a right to write this way is based on bouts of successfully disorienting field research (and, presumably, on discovering a way of taking down and using equally disorienting notes). Bringing the field home is only fair; to disorient readers is sometimes an effective way to encourage a rethinking of received categories and a reorientation of perspective. (Lederman, 1990, p. 86)

Little work has been done on life histories, telling and retelling stories, as verbal constructs,

> not only because most scholars are interested in such texts primarily as tools, but perhaps also because we usually think of extemporaneous speech as akin to the language of everyday life and therefore do not *attend* to it as closely as we do to language marked "poetic." (Patai, 1988, p. 149)

There is an alternative treatment of life histories that has some significance in this study. Tedlock compels us to see "the distortion that occurs when oral narratives are transcribed as prose," for prose "does not exist outside the written page...is inadequate to render living speech because 'there is no [uh, no Ah hah!, no] SILENCE in it'" (in Patai, 1988, p. 149). The point is made that "the silences of oral narration [and] its poetic and dramatic features" are better understood as "dramatic poetry" (Patai, 1988, p. 149). While something may be gained, "much is lost by the presumption that coherent prose narratives are the only or the most appropriate form for the presentation of lengthy transcripts" (Patai, 1988, p. 150; see also Lightning, 1992).

Crapanzano (1984) says that since life history is usually constituted through a transformation, for instance, from an oral production to a written text,

> we should like to know how (if at all) the life history interdigitates with other story forms in the subject's culture and how (if at all) the subject makes use of them in negotiations with the [researcher]. We should also like to know something about indigenous notions of authorship, rhetoric, style, and narrative techniques—figurative language, imagery, allegory, double entendre, humor, irony, "beginnings and endings," conventional silences, suspense, and denouement. Without these, as any literary critic knows, no adequate interpretation (at any level including the cultural and the psychological) can be made. (p. 957)

The relationship between the teacher and the teacher-researcher was addressed in the dramatic and the pragmatic uh, and the corresponding Ah hah!, the silence in this study because, as Crapanzano (1984) states, most life histories "read as though the narrator is addressing the cosmos" (p. 958). An older woman giving instruction to a younger woman may be different than two young women speaking to one another, and a female researcher as a receptive ear from a "foreign" land and a female speaker whose voice is being heard, and so forth. Thus, this study was not "constrained by a puritanical science tending to preclude from its purview those emotions," those dramatic and pragmatic silences, "that most deeply affect its practitioners and those they study" (Crapanzano, 1984, p. 958).

Continuity and commitment

From the start, I have emphasized, following Knowles (1988a, 1988b, 1992), my commitment to giving back the data to those who have supplied it. And I have heard from the Nepalese teachers, and Dean Bajracharya, Faculty of Education, Tribhuvan University, that it is important for these women that we meet again: some of their suggestions range to seminars, small group meetings, a conference, and so forth. At present I am working on my next project which is to aid *Guru-lekhika* in getting her self-published book of teaching tales translated into English and also put into camera-ready form for possible publication. I am trying to help one Gurung teacher who wishes to further her education. I hope to be of some assistance to another who takes care of an elderly widowed mother in her mountain village. And I have sent copies of folktales about women around the world to a number of women teachers in Nepal.

It has also been claimed that talking about one's life, telling one's story, in the company of those doing the same is constitutive of consciousness-raising, of feminist method, that "the articulation of experience (in myriad ways) is among the hallmarks of a self-determining individual or community" (Lugones & Spelman, 1983, p. 574).

In my own work, I hope to continue to do this work in many different places and with many women and men teachers: To test the "limits of our ability to create a deeper dialogue" amongst and between ourselves in the networks and skeins that intersect at key points and in conversation or story circles with our students and fellow teachers; "to be creative in our vision" of what may serve as a pedagogical signature of a curriculum critical for women and girls; "and to practice pedagogy that truly respects our students…and fellow teachers" as "persons striving to seek satisfying personal and professional lives" (Brody et al., 1991, pp. 258-9).

Search for 'generative' metaphors and spaces to reconstitute interpretive communities

"Stories open you up to the stories of others, as common and singular as your own. That remains the best way we storytelling animals have found to overcome loneliness, develop compassion and create community" (Keen, in Brody et al., 1991, p. 275).

Traditionally, the procedures adopted in most research projects have only allowed for minimum participation of persons other than the researchers themselves. Any participation is usually limited to specific phases of the project, and findings are not usually influenced by input from a collective resource. In most cases, respondents never see or hear what happens to the questions after they have asked or even answered them. For this reason, it would be most useful if this study could be further analysed and interpreted at some level by the collective (as teachers and teacher-researchers shall be known) and by the agencies and development institutions involved and interested in teacher education and policy, those who have or have had first hand experience of many of the issues and who could be instrumental in bringing about change within education and development sectors in Nepal. An international aid agency, one lending bank and everyone involved has already expressed much further interest in women teachers.

For Bakhtin (1981), "language is never unity" (p. 288). In Bakhtin's "extraordinary sensitivity to the immense plurality of experience" (Holquist, 1981, p. xx), "and in his celebration of the world's unpredictability," he suggests a more difficult and inclusive understanding (Casey, 1988, p. 82; see also Clark & Holquist, 1984, p. 347). Bakhtin's (1981) relational analysis focuses on how social discourses "do not exclude....but rather intersect with each other" (p. 291). This is not evident in "traditional cultural descriptions," according to Quantz and O'Connor (1988), for they

> are constructed by theorists from collections of formal, systemic vocalizations within the community, usually products of the ideologically powerful. They subsequently depict social change according to shifts in the dominant ideology of the culture. Attention is thus placed on the struggle of well-formed, major paradigms. Since these struggles tend to be between legitimated elites and not between the elites and the disempowered, this focus is quite the reverse of what is needed. (pp. 99-100)

Casey (1988), writing out of such intentionality, says, "it is extremely important for researchers to create a Bakhtinian sense of the spatial coexistence and temporal simultaneity of all social languages in order to portray and encourage social dialogue" (p. 83); while my attempts can only offer a beginning step toward a discourse of possibility,

> When analysis and description of history are combined with the spatial juxtaposition, the utterances of the disempowered can be situated within the greater dialogue of the day. Subcultures thus are not isolated from the powerful, their culture is set into relation to the dominant cultures surrounding them; they are not portrayed as outside of time, but seen in relation to historical forces. (Quantz & O'Connor, 1988, p. 105)

In this I have been influenced by Lather (1991) who has argued that the postmodernists' appeal to grasp the continual interplay of "agency, structure and context," and Derrida's "becoming space," is where "we can think and act with one another into the future in ways that both mark and loosen limits" (p. 101). This meant exploring "the development of a change enhancing, interactive, contextualized approach to knowledge-building…that is provocative in theory and, increasingly, method" (Lather, 1991, p. 53).

The Personal Narratives Group (1989) points out that whether framed as resistance or acquiescence, women's narratives are framed within or against a system of domination (Weiler, 1992). Frieden suggests that "we focus on the 'bad fit' or contradictions in women's presentations of themselves as a source for social transformation" (in Weiler, 1992, p. 43). In this way, "'factual disparities' or discontinuities between structural and cultural readings become, in the Popular Memory Group's (1982) alternative epistemology, sources of valuable insight, not problems of distortion" (Casey, 1988, p. 68). For instance,

> Luisa Passerini, cited by the Popular Memory Group [1982, pp. 229-30], and also committed to a Gramscian analysis, provides a dramatic example of slippage: members of the Italian working class, when asked "What do you remember of the period before the last war?" gave irrelevant and inconsistent answers. They told jokes, recited whole life stories without any reference to Fascism, and left chronological gaps of twenty years in their lives. The "bare facts" of Italian history could not begin to give us an understanding of Fascism in the way their combination with these oral histories offers to do. "This self-censorship is evidence of a scar, a violent annihilation of many years in human life, a profound wound in daily experience." (Casey, 1988, pp. 68-69).

And this is very much the place I know from where I, too, can begin to understand my own story and the stories of the displaced persons in my family who tell about their lives without any reference to the regime of German Fascism under which they were educated. According to the Popular Memory Group (1982), "the principal value of oral history is that its information comes complete with evaluations, explanations and theories, with selectivities and silences, which are intrinsic to its representation of reality" (in Casey, 1988, p. 69). Thus, this leads Casey (1988) to suggest that oral history, "read in all its rich wholeness, will illuminate conscious human activity in a way empiricism never can" (p. 69). While the alternative content of oral history "does not guarantee transformative practice; the relations of power between researcher and resource persons are even more important" (Popular Memory Group, 1982, paraphrased in Casey, 1988, p. 69).

Potential of the research to contribute to knowledge

Following Britzman's (1991) lead, it was hoped that this research would enable an understanding of "the process whereby experience becomes meaningful" and thus "requires that we situate ourselves in history and recognize as critical the relationships and intersections—both given and possible—of biography and social structure" (pp. 232-3). Stories often reveal a concern for structure (Patai, 1988). As well, Patai (1988) suggests that many of the women she interviewed commented that the very act of telling one's life story seems to invite structure—"one rethinks the events of one's life so that they make sense"—"they discovered patterns in their lives which they had not discovered until they found themselves telling their stories" (p. 149).

And I have stressed from the outset that I am committed to helping teachers benefit in a concrete way from my research labours. Appropriation and interpretation are two issues that must be addressed. I will add my voice to the obvious need for clarification and debate on the definition, direction, representation, and strategies of these two issues and others relevant for consideration. One way put forth by Zeichner and Gore (1990) to begin the democratizing process is to ensure that, at minimum, those whose are studied have an opportunity to read and react to researchers' portrayals. In doing so, I referred to and built on the small but scattered literature on Nepalese women teachers and their significant contribution to educational reform in the past. I have attempted to show that just as we know that women in developing countries are not mere passive recipients of welfare activity nor are women teachers of educational activity, but that their participation in questing and questioning gives rise to self-generated practice crucial to the future of teacher education and practice and policy planning for educational reform.

Usefulness to practitioners, planners, teacher educators, and policymakers

Above all, the concern of my study was an emergent concern of teachers and scholars that crosses social and cultural boundaries: "concern with life-course issues," which affect our "ability to maintain a proper balance between personal and professional demands, and concern with the nature of modern organizations as they influence our ability to remain effective in our work or to remain in our work at all" (see also Brody et al., 1991). This is part of the growing challenge of building and practicing an inclusive, collaborative pedagogy which "focuses on the influence of culture, gender, age and intellectual assumptions as these factors affect professionals' visions of their work, lives and hopes for the evolution of their community" (Brody et al., 1991, p. 259; see also the *Graduate catalog*, 1986, p. 10).

It was anticipated that the example of collaboration with women teachers and those becoming teachers would illustrate how non-traditional methodological tools can assist planners in the appraisal and evaluation of complex planning interventions and the formulation of more gender-aware proposals at policy, program, or project level, within particular socio-economic and political contexts.

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[1] Nelle Morton said, in 1977, in an unpublished sermon about ritualized settings in which women gather together to share and birth their stories, women "hear each other into speech" (in Christ, 1980, p. 7; see also Morton, 1972, pp. 163-76). Morton's "phrase captures the dynamic in which the presence of other women who have had similar experiences makes it possible for women to say things they have never said

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before, to think thoughts they would have suppressed" (Christ, 1980, p. 7; see also Prentice, 1991, on scholarly passion).

[2] Hirsch (1989) asked this question within the frame of women writers working within the "Euro-American patriarchal context of discourse....'Where are the mothers telling their own stories?'" Like Hirsch, Alonso (1993), Casey (1990), Oldfield (1989), Ruddick (1989/1990), I have undertaken the task of seeking women's quest in teacher-as-mother stories. I am have also taken on the task of seeking teacher-as-dissident-daughter stories "to discover the actual social circumstances within which such understandings have emerged, and to find the forms which they have taken" (Casey, 1990, p. 310, on "teacher as mother").

[3] See also Ellis (1986).

[4] See for instance, Swaney (1994, p. 52) on alternative means of communication in Tonga.

[5] See Schulz (1990a).

[6] *Guru-lekhika's* mother was one wife among three.

Chapter 4

BEING AND BECOMING A WOMAN TEACHER: JOURNEY THROUGH NEPAL

"The Festival"
I remember the day the doctor nodded and confirmed
your arrival
How happy I was, how contented!
I felt you grow inside me
With every twist and turn, with every kick,
My heart squeezed with joy, and did its own jig!
I longed for a girl,
I wanted a daughter, a living doll to call my own.
Through a veil of pain...
numbed by excitement
I laboured for your arrival.
Then with a push you slipped through
A wet, pink and slippery bundle of joy.
I sighed with relief.
I congratulated myself.
It was a girl!
Though exhaustion claimed my body
My mind refused to cooperate,
to be drugged into obvious sleep.
For it was revelling in its own carnival
It was enjoying
The Festival of the Coming of the Daughter!
And the revelry has continued unabated
Through these past twelve years
Watching you
Stutter and sing,
Cry and crawl...
Now, on the threshold of womanhood,
You are more of a daughter than ever before.
And my mind today still sings with joy as it did
On the day that you were born a dozen years ago.

—poem written
on the birth of her daughter
by a Kathmandu mother who wishes
to remain unnamed, in ***Himal****, 1991, p. 8*

Festival time: 'The...Coming of the Daughter!'

Each of us journeys to understanding on our own paths, but I began to understand how Nepalese girls had come to be teachers in my own way. I tried to walk the same path a Nepalese girl might take from a road to a school. I walked to one primary school in order to interview a mountain village woman teacher, a half-day walk from a seasonal motorable road along a path, over and around boulders, across a long rope bridge, slippery even for the sure-footed during the monsoon, with many steep climbs in the rain, with views of green rice paddies up against green hills, and lower down nearer the river, for the faltering one on the march, leeches. A force of nature, surely, but I remember the shock when I peeled off my shoes and socks and happened to glance down. The sure-footed daughter of a Gurkha who accompanied me on my way back to the road caught me by the hand several times. She never once fell down, and she wore plastic high heels.

Having waited patiently for and having persistently taken up the opportunity of such time and space along a gradient of spiralling complexity, I had come far to ask 112 women student teachers at one campus, 13 in-service teachers at two campuses of the national university, and 13 women teachers in schools in Nepal: How had they come to be teachers? What were the constraints and how had they been overcome? How would their stories figure in the larger public and private domains? In this chapter, I tell their stories about the path taken, the helping hand, the walking without stumbling, the taken for granted not seeing of the women, and the new vistas at every step.

The path taken

The first schools and orientation to perspectives

In my imaginal rendering of the first schools that the women in this study attended and their views of these schools, based on their writings, I imagine a movement between several areas:

1) body—school—space, who and what takes up space in those schools—

2) town or village and the time it takes from home to school—

3) landscape-wilderness, how close to a forest where children can engage in play and in thoughtfulness—

4) cosmos and global village, including how far from Nepal—

5) and back again to the location in the village, the seating arrangements, teaching material, and the pretty picture of Nepal versus the exigencies of life in Nepal.

In Nepal, one woman drew a picture of her primary school. It had about 80 students, only 6 girls, she said. Another mentioned that her school was in a city, altogether 3 buildings, housing a library and 3 practical rooms (Science and 2 vocational), with 1200 students and 33 teachers. For yet another woman, it was in an undeveloped small village where there were no facilities, no latrines, and no drinking water, a 45-minute walk from the road and a 10-minute walk from home. It might have been a two-storied cement building in a town or district administrative centre surrounded by a compound wall with about 2000 students, a hilly place where there was also a forest nearby where the children could play, and where the smaller children liked to play more than study. For a select few, it was the Gurkha children school of Hong Kong or Brunei or in India because their Chhetri, Thakuri, Magar, or Gurung fathers were in the British or Indian army.

Perhaps it was in the middle of a Nepalese village and very pleasant, long or L-shaped, of stone and mud with 5 rooms, but not enough benches and desks for the students. Perhaps it was made of stones and clay and located half-way between two villages. Maybe in a city where all the students had desks and benches, 40/45 teachers for 200 students, 35 rooms and sufficient teaching material. Perhaps it was a place in foreigners' photographs, a school that always comes first or second in various contests: A pretty picture of school and life in Nepal.

The school roof might have leaked when it rained, and the zinc sheet of the roof may have been driven away by a strong wind. Imagine a school where there were no facilities like latrines, rest places, taps, or a playground and no display or reading materials. Imagine a school on top of a mountain. These women who experienced such schools noted that though there were limited facilities it was not always bad. For some, the temple of *Saraswati*—where Hinduism and Buddhism get thoroughly blended in a female deity of learning or wisdom[1]—in the middle of the school created an atmosphere of peace. Imagine a school situated on the bank of a river, a very poor school, without facility, yet the surrounding environment was pleasant. There were trees around the school and a pond with fish, perhaps a garden or mango trees nearby. Imagine another built by the help of the villagers, where the teachers were very honest and dedicated. They always tried to teach good things to the students. These are the schools that took hold of girls' imaginations, and as young women becoming teachers, they remembered: Snow-covered mountains to the east and west, green hills to the north and south, in-between two great rivers of the "Hill Country" or "*Pahar* Country," with *Champ* trees around it and a *pipal* tree in the east: In a word beautiful!

One woman remembered the school in view of the teachers who were not very *competent*, a headmaster who could not control the students, and by the floor that was unplastered and it was dirty, even though students washed the floor with mud and clay every Friday. It was all a learning environment, and it depended upon what drew your attention. For another, there was an ever-present shortage of chalk—the younger students, girls especially, obtain the calcium their rapidly growing bodies require by quietly consuming the chalk they are given at the beginning of class and that of any other who puts theirs down[2]—and the playground was very small, so slippery in the rain that everyone would fall down.

Imagine a roof of straw or hay over the students sitting on stones. One student teacher wrote that there was no provision of drinking water, and it had to be brought from a far distance. There was no latrine, only the forest nearby. *It was at the top of a mountain.* If you came to some of these schools, you would have had to bring your own mat to sit on, sometimes the boys would steal the mat or gunny sack a girl was trying to sit on. The floor and the walls were washed with red clay. One teacher might have taught all the subjects in a primary school that had three rooms and that was now being remembered in a cinder-block campus building to have been more like a sheep or goat shed than a school.

Westman (1991) writes how "language tends toward places where we ourselves are not, in a given situation." The play of words and physical movement across this terrain for women and girls in Nepal focuses the aperture of what in Heidegger's (1954) terms "opens the house of being":

> This "opening" consists of a forward and backward movement between the body and the cosmos....over this bridge or ladder of meaning....between several areas, which at the same time grow in scale and distance: body—dwelling—town—landscape-wilderness—cosmos—and back again. (Westman, 1991, p. 19)

Across seasons, across time and space, 'the rush and fury of tempests'

I had begun this collection of responses from women who are and who are becoming teachers in the spring season, April-May, *Baisakh*, the first month of the Nepali calendar year, a season of "mother-worship," a custom based on a popular saying in *the* valley (Kathmandu), "Mother and mother country are better than heaven" (Majupuria, 1989).

I returned to Canada just around the time of the first leg of the monsoon or the rainy season in Nepal, where it is still recounted that

> Indra, the God of Rain, provides a shower bath to the Mother Earth to help her cleanse herself so that she might grow healthy and productive, for the womenfolk of Nepal this is an annual occasion to cleanse themselves. (Majupuria, 1989, p. 76)

A dramatic figure, Indra, the God of Rain, who in the Vedic period (1500-800BC) became the great heroic deity of the conquering Aryans, the God of Warrior Might, the god of battle and storm, "the god who won their battles, broken open the heavenly fortresses, and let the waters forth to cool the parched fields" (Frazer, 1898/1970, pp. 18, 52-3, 75). In Indra's hand is carried "the flaming lightning; he is seated upon a golden chariot, and by his side the Storm-gods, or 'Maruts,' ride through the heavens, with all the rush and fury of tempests" (Frazer, 1898/1970, p. 53).

According to Crites (1971), these stories would

> seem to be elusive expressions of stories that cannot be fully and directly told, because they live, so to speak, in the arms and legs and bellies of the celebrants. These stories lie too deep in the consciousness of the people to be directly told. (p. 294)

The conquering strength of metaphor—the present dominance of market thinking, "the growing penetration of international capital through aid intervention," and the theory-driven practice in the dominant discourse of education and development that I studied in class and in books in Canada has this quality of a storm, of promising *a ride through the heavens, with all the rush and fury of tempests*, i.e., "unintentionally echoing common images of an unchanging passive, (feminine) 'traditional' society catalysed into 'modernizing' change by dynamic, active (masculine) development intervention" (White, 1992, p. 155).

The uneasy state of repeated crossings back and forth between levels of terrain, unintentionally connected common images of moods and motivations: For example, from a poor and illiterate father of an unschooled child at Gorkha, I had already felt the lash of similar "sarcasm" and had moved on as a different daughter, as an educated daughter of displaced and largely unschooled German-Romanian artisan/peasants to gain a Ph.D. in Canada:

> The school robs us in many ways—our useful time, our concern of life, our hard-earned money—and returns to us our children who are spoilt by modern vices, and who are temperamentally too stubborn to tame. (in MOEC/UNESCO, 1990, p. 87)

A woman student teacher in Nepal noted how

> When I was studying in the primary school an old man said, "why you girls have to study? After all you are going to work in the household, even though you are educated." This comment made me decide to become a teacher to show him.

Another made note of "a lady teacher who scolded me saying that neither I can pass SLC [School Leaving Certificate] nor I can be a teacher. So I want to be a teacher and teach the children of that very teacher." While a third woman student teacher suggested that teachers provided her with orientation to move on when order begins to suffer from the effects of entropy: "I was influenced by my teachers who kept on saying while I was in my primary level that education is a right and satisfaction is a great enemy, which inspired me to get higher education." These stories made me think about my own influences, which seem to be moving me, and about being really tired, about wanting some release from being so driven.

The clash of stories told

From ancient Sanskrit literature, "the court and literary language of Nepal during the Licchavi period" (5th century A.D. to mid 9th century), "the 'Golden Age' of Nepali history" (Shaha, 1992), which preserves in structure and grammatical forms affinities with the Aryan languages of Europe, Frazer (1898/1970) reveals Indra's ability to change forms:

> He shines with all the beauty of the dawn, with all the glory of the sun; he "speaks in thunder"; he "gleams like the lightning":—"Yet not one form alone he bears,/ But various shapes of glory wears,/ His aspect changing at his will,/ Transmuted, yet resplendent still." (p. 54)

No wonder that my imagination, like the imaginations of the early bards, was stirred deeply in this place, just as in the mists of time now long-forgotten ancestors had been stirred in similar terrain:

> From the shadowed recesses of the silent forests bordering the mountain ranges. . . .From the far-off plains [where] the rain-clouds rolled on towards the mountain passes. . . .It was Nature that held spell-bound the imagination of the new-come Aryans, and it was to glorify her, and seek the aid of her powers—vaguely personifed as "devas," "deities," or "bright ones,"—that the Vedic poets composed their songs of praise. (Frazer, 1898/1970, p. 18)

Side by side with the Vedic literature, preserved in hymns, prayers, epics, puranas, and incantations to tribal deities, "there existed in India," and throughout Nepal,

> from times that may stretch back to the mists of Indo-Germanic antiquity, the legends of tribal warriors and their heroic deeds. These were held among the people as their national folk-songs, and were sung from court to court, from homestead to homestead, by travelling bards. (Frazer, 1898/1970, p. 211)

What happens when there is a clash or asymmetry of stories? In the Vedic hymns

> Indra and Soma are prayed to cast the wicked into the depths, into a darkness profound, from which they emerge not. Again, in another verse, it is said that a deep place has been made for those maidens without brothers who wander about doing evil; for women who deceive their husbands, who are sinful, unrighteous, and untruthful. (Frazer, 1898/1970, p. 39)

Even today in Nepal, the professional musician or bard is known to sing from village to village (and my father was once a travelling singer and dancer in Germany before the war) and in his store of songs exist "these ruggedly-versed stories," which get told and retold, concerned in time and space more with the heroic characters than with the historic setting from which they emerge and in other times and places re-emerge, i.e., "the two great Herculean labours of Brahmanism" (Frazer, 1898/1970), the Hindu epics, the *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana*.

Across this rugged terrain, 'she should be able to discuss with others'

The women who are and who are becoming teachers in Nepal wrote about the physical and mental tension across levels and terrains that make it difficult for women to be teachers, to be important education workers in the universalization of primary education (UPE) in Nepal.

In Nepal, the levels in terrain, between an individual's essence to create as a moral force and the Hindu moral order, encompass a cyclical or repetitive understanding of history, a pattern of birth and rebirth for the individual, which straddle the "age of truth," *satya yug*, and "the age of darkness," *kali yug* (Raeper & Hoftun, 1992). "To lessen the mental tension of the girls because most of the girls of the village do not go to school" is significant for this woman student teacher. In order to achieve some flow across rugged terrain, another suggested a daughter "should be able to discuss with others," but in the interregnum, some women in Nepal believe they are free "not to have been influenced by anyone" to become a teacher.

'A chariot needs two wheels'

I asked Nepalese women, "if there are different ideas for boys and girls, tell what these different ideas were and what you thought about them." Their comments put back together tell a story: A chariot, that stately or triumphal flying vehicle for celestial navigation, also needs two wheels. One woman student teacher wrote that it is often heard:

> —"We should not educate our daughters
> —they will be spoiled by education
> —they have to work inside home
> —they have to go in another's house and do the same thing."
> I did not like this discrimination and was always worried. When a chariot needs two wheels so both men and women are needed in functioning of the world.

In this symbolic expression lies much of the ambiguity and tension that exists between women and men in Nepal, and elsewhere, which goes back in time. Sen (1990) writes,

> it may not be terribly important to know how all this got started, that is, whether *because* of the physical asymmetries relevant in the "primitive" situation or though some other process (e.g., as Engels, 1884[/1969/1972], had argued, through the emergence of private property). (p. 138)

But it is important to note that "such asymmetries—however developed—are stable and sustained, and the relative weakness of women in cooperative conflict in one period tends to sustain relative weakness in the next" (Sen, 1990, p. 138). Rubin (1975) suggests it is in our interest, as women, to delve further; Papanek (1984) suggests "such knowledge cuts deep, even if it is never used."

In Gross' (1993) chapter on "Sayadhita, Daughters of the Buddha: Roles and Images of Women in Early Indian Buddhism," there is a verse cited by Horner:

> And be it woman, be it man for whom
> Such chariot doth wait, by that same car
> Into Nirvana's presence they shall come. (p. 49; Horner, 1930, p. 104; see also Yuichi, 1982, p. 59)

This can be seen in the *Hindu Scriptures*, Bhagavad-Gita:

> Base-born though he may be,
> Yes, women too, and artisans, even serfs,
> Theirs it is to tread the highest Way. (Bhagavad-Gita IX, 32, in Zaehner, 1966, p. 289)

A Nepalese in-service teacher wrote a maternal response to "the feeling that the daughters should not get more freedom. I felt very bad. I used to feel that I would never keep my daughter in this situation." This is a situation where "society looked down upon the daughters," and this student teacher added, "it is thought that the daughters go to another's house, and I felt very bad about that." One student teacher reported that family "did not ask the sons to work and gave [them] time to study, but for the daughters, she had to work by the moment she entered home from school till the time she goes to school next day." This student teacher noted how it was often "said daughters should not be taught. If they are taught, they will not do household chores"; while another responds, "I do not like household chores," and one woman student teacher made it plain: "I was deadly against this tradition."

It was often said to one woman student teacher, "A daughter should help the parents in the household chores; daughters are supposed to go to the other's house, so they need not be educated. Literacy would be enough for them," while in her opinion, "a daughter should get equal opportunity to study and in household chores." A second woman student teacher wrote, "Women should get more free time from home; they should get full recognition in society."

One woman student teacher is experiencing this existential condition: "As I am a Nepali woman, there is no exciting part in my life, and I don't have a desire to live." Another wrote, "I don't see any possibility of universalization of education for women."

'From the same village' to the global village

"Humans have a need for symbols that can express the depth and intimacy of life and ground our strivings in what Geertz has called 'the conception of a general order of existence'" (Christ, 1987, p. 138; see also Geertz, 1973). Like Christ (1987), I believe, too, that we have only begun with this notion to "plumb the resonances between our experiences and those of other women." The stories of Nepalese women who are and who are becoming teachers inspired me to begin to imagine the diversity and changeability of the primary school context within their context in Nepal and, having come from far and away, within my own.

Some of the first schools encountered have changed: An in-service teacher

> studied in the primary school of [her] own village....There was no school building when I studied there. The classes were run in the public restplace and in the inn. *The teachers were from the same village, that's why I joined that school.* In the beginning, there was only grade one, and there were only few students; [now] there are about 275 students [and] more girls than boys. Now the school has its own building.

One student teacher wrote how her school had changed because of the international community of trekkers. According to Dankelman and Davidson (1988), "since Nepal opened its borders to foreign visitors in 1950, the dramatic increase of trekking" has not only "damaged the natural and cultural environment" and "the hills of Nepal," as "a prime example," but the "tourists' demands for food and services have aggravated deforestation and had a major impact on the social and economic life of women" (p. 60). "It is tourism (among other factors [and this factor is oddly missing from international agencies' and government-sponsored literature on women and girls' education]) that has discouraged girls from continuing education, as their labour is perceived to be of more value than that of boys," who "in addition to their traditional duties of fuel, fodder and water collection and agricultural labour," service the tourist industry. "But the girls are rarely paid and earn only their keep" (Dankelman & Davidson, 1988, p. 60). I found it intriguing to note how this woman student teacher played with the levels and dials of her global village:

> There were two buildings—one for up to grade 3, and the other was for grade 4 and 5. The school building was on the plain top of the hill. There was a field above the school. Just below the field there was a slop land. There was a small shop to facilitate the school. There was a peon to clean the school and to bring drinking water.…*The school has become a restplace for tourists now.* Because many tourists…come there nowadays.

A Nepalese in-service woman teacher invoked the notion of "universal brotherhood," belief in the global village, which teachers should have and which will allow women teachers to be important education workers in the UPE in Nepal. Pico Iyer (1994), in a talk entitled "The Stranger at the Door" given at the Institute of World Culture, in Santa Barbara, California, speaks from this position:

> The global village is one of those ideas to which almost everyone can give assent; it rhymes with all the notions with which we buoy and congratulate ourselves—the family of man, the brotherhood of souls, the replacement of walls with bridges. The global village tells us, in powerful, palpable ways, that we're all one race under the skin and that, beneath all the superficial differences of custom and fashion and tongue, the fears and fantasies of that villager in, say, [Nepal] are not so different from our own.…one touch of nurture makes the whole world kin. (excerpted in "Strangers in a Small World," 1994, p. 13)

But in Nepal, with the multitude of influences that have shaped its society, from pre-Aryan or non-Aryan cults to Vedic Brahmanism to modern Hinduism and Buddhism, the gateway to the neighboring village is often closed to girls and women. One in-service woman teacher summed up what makes it difficult for women teachers to be important UPE workers in Nepal: "Traditions and superstitions; discrimination against men and women; illiteracy; reaction of reputed people in society." While this in-service woman teacher sketched in these details: "low pay scale" for teachers, "male dominated society; no freedom," which for her translated into "economic pressure," and for yet another, "it is difficult for a woman teacher to go to the different places she needs to go."

The gateway to the global village is further removed. One woman student teacher counted the days: "when there was something to do at home I used to leave the school. I was absent for a month or 45 days in a year due to my low economic condition." Another replied that she was not in school "to help in the house or to help friends sometimes." Another *remembered what her mother said*: "I was weak and used to be so sick [I] had to remain absent sometimes." One woman "was absent…to look after the house, because [otherwise] there was none to do household chores." This was the situation one student teacher described for "the children of illiterate poor farmers [who] engage us in many works. Sometimes we [were] sick and due to lack of treatment we have to remain home for long."

Another said sometimes, "I had no papers and pencil. So I used to be absent…in the fear of scolding by the teacher." This woman student teacher also remembered

> as a girl I had to work much and also I didn't care going to school, rather skipped school and played with friends. *I also feared being beaten* by the teachers. I could not answer their questions.

One woman student teacher wrote how "the teacher used to assign us work and sleep, we used to talk, and he used to beat [us] with a stick." These stories of beatings from teachers I had already heard from my mother about her own and her sister's schooling, under a fascist regime in Germany and Romania, and I experienced it in Canada where the strap in schools of thought was all the rage.

These women student teachers brought back to life my mother's words about the teacher who had beaten girls who tried to write with their left hand. Finally, one gave up. Another began to write with her right hand, but neither my mother nor her sisters in this village attached much importance to further education in this vein. In Nepal, one student teacher wrote how

> when I had just begun schooling, I did not know how to draw a straight line, the teachers used to write *Ka* (First Nepali letter), if not [straight] line the teachers used to beat which I didn't like.

One woman student teacher emphasized,

> Yes, I was absent…because there was *no transportation* facility in *the remote area*. In *rainy season* it was difficult to cross the stream and I had to come back. Sometimes I was absent due to illness.

One woman student teacher had this theory, "*people like our work more than study*!" A second added in another urgent dimension, for her "parents were old and there were problems related to old age." A third woman student teacher noted the exigency of a family where there was "only me and my mother…to look after the domestic affairs. Therefore, I used to be absent to help my mother." While a fourth wrote how her "father used to go to graze goats daily. Once suddenly he became sick for a month and I had to go to graze the goats which made me absent in the class."

In-service woman teachers missed days of primary school due to illness: "various works and sickness," "housework and sickness," or "due to long illness." One in-service teacher wrote that she was absent because "sometimes I was sick and sometimes due to laziness." I began to wonder about the levels and terrains where so much that is physical and moral is required of so many girls and women.

Across this terrain between home and primary school:
Adventure, hazard, joy, and geography

Women who are being and becoming teachers in Nepal have helped me to visualize their lives as lived between orchard and barren fields, between metaphorical and literal terrains of "space, play, and time" (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995), between home and school, and which, according to Innis, can be described as part of "tacit knowledge" (in Westman, 1991). According to Westman (1991), generally,

> We do not feel the tacit knowledge anchored in our bodily movements, before the moment we stop using our eyes: when we do not see. In a way we are first really at home in our dwelling when we are able to move around the house even though it is a dark night. The body knows where things are. (p. 19)

"Like a journey or a quest," the levels and terrains of "teaching and learning are a continuous experience of adventure, hazard, and joy, an experience of interpersonal relationships" (Wilson, in Hill, 1994). Clandinin and Connelly (1995) have helped me to visualize "the professional knowledge landscape" of teachers/learners "as composed of relationships among people, places, and things," as an intellectual/moral landscape (p. 5).

Understanding what Nepalese women student teachers were telling me was a lesson in geography, and "geography has determined the very existence of Nepal as a separate nation" (Shaha, 1992, p. 2). The teachers, student teachers, and I, in conversation and even in the cramped forum of questionnaires, seem to be creating a relation between women that is not included in any analysis about the hill area, "a haven for people from north and south…the 'ethnic turntable of Asia'" (Shaha, 1992). The hill region has a long history in Nepal and a geography that has determined Nepal's culture and economy: "The culture and traditions of Nepal is an amalgam of the traditions of these small hill kingdoms and the kingdoms of the Valley" (Shaha, 1992, p. vii).

The trouble with latrines

The most unlovely question I brought along was this one: "What kind of sanitation facilities did your primary school have? For girls, for boys? Please describe." I had included it without questioning it from a colleague's survey of nursing students about primary health care in Nepal. But even though this question seems out of place in this study, it has revealed a systemic disregard for the basic needs of girls and women in Nepal.

"There were no facilities of latrines and drinking water in the primary school. This…I did not like" (woman student teacher, life-history questionnaire, 1993). One woman student teacher drew the line at there being "pit latrines for the boys and the girls. But most of the students used to go to the stream for toilet." She describes "the primary school where I studied [as] situated in a barren hill of a village."

One woman student teacher responded, "no toilet, so I used do somewhere bush, side of the way." This situation was regarded by a second as "the school of the poor," which for her meant "there was forest behind the school." Another woman student teacher wrote, "there was a forest near the school so there was no sanitation facility in the school." A fourth noted, "my primary school was near my house. It had not latrine as it was near the road. We used to go to the forest for toilets." This woman student teacher noted a measure of equality in the situation where "there was no latrine facility. Both the boys and girls had to go to the forest for toilet." But this woman emphasized that "the forest near the school *was* our toilet."

The facilities had a hierarchy, which for this woman student teacher meant there was "a pit latrine for teachers only." One woman then suggested "that's why children used to make dirty everywhere." Another noted how "we use to use school ground for toilet purpose," while two woman student teachers made it plain: "We had to go somewhere outside the school, mostly in the pasture land," or "anywhere we like."

There were gender lines drawn in these turf wars: This student teacher noted "there was a pit latrine for the boys, but there was no latrine for the girls. The girls used to go to the stream." A second mentioned that when "there was only one latrine in the school [it] was mostly used by the boys because they were in large numbers. The girls mostly went to streams, fields, and bushes." A third woman student teacher told how

> In the beginning there was no provision of latrine in the school. They had made separate pit latrines for boys and girls after some time. But the naughty boys broke the door and there was a problem of latrine again.

This woman teacher suggested the temporality of the situation, where "there was no good sanitation facility for the boys and the girls. There was only a temporary latrine and it was very dirty," and for another, where "there was no sanitation facility.... *there were streams and forests for toilet purposes*. There was a small latrine for staff only!"

This woman student teacher noted,

> there was a two room toilet for both the boys and girls....One was for teachers and one for the students. There was no provision of water. The boys used to make it dirty and the girls used [to] go far. There was no alternative.

This woman student teacher was critical as I have now come to wonder myself at the question:

> It is difficult to have a flush toilet in a village like a town. Who bothers about that? But still then we had a toilet. There was no provision of water and it was very dirty. But we had no alternative.

Are these the kinds of questions (e.g., about the sites of practices when and where we felt we had no alternative) we ask of women in the North? If not, why not? Is there some truth in the belief that I also share that we have to go far afield when we have no alternative. It is appropriate to ask the question as 83% of the women student teachers responded that they had a simple pit latrine. But what was does that tell us? Not much alongside what these student teachers wrote in paying attention to finer points, "even when both the boys and girls had separate [facilities] as they were not aware of cleanliness it used to be dirty." Separate facilities were highlighted by 23% of the women student teachers who completed the questionnaire: If they were "*separate we did not feel any trouble*." One woman student teacher could not help but notice that yes while "there were separate latrines.... The toilet for the boys was nearer the school than the one for girls." And then finally the exigency of that which is bigger than all of us. This student teacher sums up: "There was no good sanitation facility for the boys and the girls. There was an ordinary latrine which used to collapse...due to rain and bad weather."

The lack of adequate human facilities tells a story about schools; while access to schools may be encouraging more participation from girls, the most basic of facilities are not very accommodating in their eyes. Are there taboos; is it sacred or forbidden and the Tongan-Polynesian language from which—*tapu* or *tabu*—emerges virtually combines both meanings; are there human experiences that aid officials, government building contracts, and development theories cannot take into account?

"Human beings cannot live without the whole ecological community that supports and makes possible our existence" (Ruether, 1983, p. 87). There is evidence of the "poverty of human symbolic expression" in the "denigration of the female body," in Nepal and elsewhere, "expressed in cultural and religious taboos" (Christ, 1987):

> in the ancient world and among modern women, the [missing or denigrated] symbol represents the birth, death, and rebirth processes of the human and natural worlds. The female body is viewed as the direct incarnation of waxing and waning, life and death cycles in the universe. (p. 125)

The influence of the past on the present

In Nepal, young women becoming teachers suggest that stories provide "orientation" to "great powers," but one student teacher wrote about her primary school experience: "I did not like moral education where it is said that the demon's blood created the sea. This can have negative effect on the children." Another woman student teacher wrote,

> I didn't like most of the parts in moral education and Sanskrit because there were some lessons that created illusion based on false stories. *In moral education there was a lesson that explained earth's creation (origin) from the flesh, skin and blood of a monster.*

The composers of the Vedic hymns, the Indo-Aryans, speaking some language, older than Sanskrit, who sought a home and who eventually achieved social and religious supremacy, though not without opposition, tell

> of the creation of all things from the sacrifice of a fabulous monster....The same...mode of accounting for creation is found in the Norse legend, where the earth, the seas, water, mountains, clouds, and firmament, are formed by dividing up the body of the Giant Ymir. So also in the Chaldæan story a monster woman is divided in twain by Bel, to form the heavens and earth. The same story runs through the myths of the Iroquois in North America, as well through those of Egypt and Greece. In the Vedic legend the monster Purusha has a thousand heads, a thousand eyes, and a thousand feet....From him sprang forth all the creatures....
>
> So far the story runs close to those of other folk....The Vedic account, however, goes on to add that from Purusha also sprang four castes or classes of the people. There is no escape from the conclusion that this is an attempt to force an antiquity for a modern social system by connecting it with an undeniably ancient legend. (Frazer, 1898/1970, pp. 24-5)

The caste system, which "has survived in India for over 2,000 years, though not without modification" (Liddle & Joshi, 1986/1989; Thapar, 1966; Weber, 1958) in Nepal, "has been unorthodox and permeable from the beginning" (Bista, 1991). The classical *Varna* model prescribed in the ancient Code of Manu (*Manusmriti*) reveals female social roles/values:

> Women and sudras [untouchables] were regarded as life-long slaves from birth to death, with slavery inborn in them; the same value was attached to the life of a woman and a sudra, for anyone who killed an artisan, a mechanic, a sudra or a woman had to perform two penances and give 11 bulls to atone for it. (Manu V, 139, in Sharma, 1966, p. 331; see also Liddle & Joshi, 1986/1989, p. 65; Parasara VI, 16, in Sharma, 1966, p. 29).

Women's spiritual quest may involve lifting up a great boulder and peering underneath:

> Caste is both a structural system and a cultural one. The structure consists of a hierarchy of in-marrying groups, organised into hereditary occupations....

> The cultural system comprises belief in karma (that the circumstances of birth depend on previous actions), commitment to caste occupation and lifestyle, belief in the hereditary transmissions of psychological traits associated with occupation, tolerance of distinct lifestyles for other castes, and belief in a hierarchy of values along a scale of purity and pollution.... Three of the major signs of purity [i.e.,] tight constraints on women [indicate] that a significant degree of ritual purity comes through domestic activities. (Liddle & Joshi, 1986/1989, p. 58; Sinha, 1967, p. 95)

These are some of the physical lines embedded in moral lines women who are becoming teachers must negotiate on the path to being a teacher in Nepal. Tales of the ancients and contemporary lessons remind us that there is evidence of an ongoing battle between those with a bird's eye view, the sky gods, and those with a view of the terrain, the gods of the earth and the underworld. How does this translate in the realm of women being and becoming teachers?

The important cosmic female principle of *sakti*, whose totality is encompassed by the goddess Devi and of which Sita and Durga are manifestations (Gray, 1990), underlies the traditional stories which get told and retold in Nepal. For instance,

> Dasai, *tika* interactions involve a more complex set of messages about the *social persona* of women. Dasai, celebrated in the month of Aswin (September-October) is the most joyous, auspicious and important festival in Nepal. The main theme of Dasai is the victory of good over evil with the goddess Durga as the main agent. (Gray, 1990, p. 229)

Sakti (Devi) incorporates three important aspects of the female principle: "First, there is the fertility aspect, the Mother Goddess" who represents "the potential for reproduction; second, the image of the devoted wife whose fidelity and submissiveness to her husband and purity is personified in Sita"; and the third aspect is Kali/Durga—used interchangeably—who "became insane (uncontrollable), terrorizing the gods and the populace," who personify "the uncontrolled and bloodthirsty goddess without mercy" (Gray, 1990, pp. 229-30).

Sita is the faithful, submissive, devoted, and fertile wife, and this image of woman informs Nepal's present day society. Three ideas about sex have created barriers to the education of girls and women in Nepal: Sexual desire should be a function of fertility, perpetuation of the household, and cooperation. "Uncontrolled sexual desire is what a mother-in-law considers the improper use of her daughter-in-law's sexual weapon over her son," among household members, "diverting his devotion away from his parents and brothers," which leads "to conflicts within the domestic group" (Gray, 1990, p. 231, on Chhetri woman in Nepal). The ideal image for women personified as purity in the role of Sita was service and sacrifice (Gray, 1990; Pearson, 1990).

Traditional Hindu values place "a premium on wifely benevolence," and even for "those who fulfilled...new roles," for example, "those of lawyer, teacher, politician, religious reformer and poet," it was "emphasized that those who fulfilled such new roles must act in concert with the old values of womanhood" (Pearson, 1990, p. 141, on female intelligentsia at the turn of the century, Bombay). A good example can be found in a small booklet entitled *The Indian Ideal of Womanhood,* where Swami Ranganathananda (1966) writes that Hindu women "must grow and develop in the footsteps of Sita," the heroine of the Hindu epic, *Ramayana*, "and *that is the only way*" (pp. 15-16; emphasis added).

In spite of the narrow role ascribed to women in present day Nepal, women as teachers once held a relatively high position in Hinduism, and there were two periods when women's education prospered: during the Vedic period (1500-800BC) and in the Upanishad period (800-300BC).

Nepal has "virtually closed" its doors to the story of the diverse levels and terrains of women's experiences, limiting the view of women to the role of servants to males, "as the sex to service males," as the sex responsible to bear children and to maintain households (Joshi & Anderson, 1994). This narrow view of women reveals a fundamental disrespect for women, and the ancient Hindus felt this attitude could have serious consequences. For them, respect for women was honey to the Gods as an ancient Hindu proverb foretold: "Where women are respected, gods roam there" (Joshi & Anderson, 1994).

Across this terrain would you want a daughter to live through your experiences?

In the questionnaires, designed to act as a counterpoint of younger female voices, those striving to be the next generation of women teachers, to the voices of those women already recognized as teachers in Nepal, I asked, "If you had a daughter, would you want her to live through your experiences? What parts would you want her to avoid?" An in-service teacher wrote, "Yes, because giving education is just like giving valuables to someone," while a woman student teacher responded,

> Yes I want. *Because a nation cannot develop without women.* I have not to face many miseries in my life. Even then, I do not like to make difference between a son and a daughter that I experienced.

This woman student teacher plays with the dials, arguing, "I was in trouble from the very beginning. The family and society also despise the daughters." A second woman student teacher responded that being a daughter was "the bitter experience of my life" she would mediate for her own daughter: "I would not discriminate against [daughter]. I would give more care to [her] according to her age." A third woman student teacher would guide her daughter in this way: "I would not let her feel that 'I am a helpless woman' but I want to make her more aware that we also can work like men and are not inferior to them," which for another meant giving a daughter the "opportunity to [have the] best education. So that she may not find discrimination between sons and daughters and build confidence."

An in-service woman teacher had "faced...difficulty" in her education as her parents had "received only primary and high school education." She wanted to be able to make suggestions "about the subjects to be taken in higher education so that [daughters] can make a good career." Another woman student teacher largely agreed: "We know that the world is changing. Many change[s] occur in time, and my daughter might experience all, but I don't want her to experience [what] I had experienced."

One woman student teacher was taciturn (mum) about the mother in the context of family: "I have an educated father thus not much difference" in ideas about education for boys and girls in her situation. Another student teacher explains further about what this context is in Nepal, but in coming up with an answer, I recognize in this context, if a daughter is coming to be a teacher that in itself is social change; and she is one of its authors:

> Our society is patriarchal. So there *is* discrimination between sons and daughters. They love sons more than the daughters. It might be due to lack of education. I cannot say in which areas they discriminate but they do in education. It may change in time I believe.

In the three-teacher interview, a 43-year-old Brahmin woman who teaches History to Classes 8, 9, and 10 wrote her story as an accurate and usable past for her four daughters. "I feel they should not grow up as orphans like me. Because my father died when I was very young and I had to spend my childhood," what she calls "the best exciting part of my life....with my mother alone with many hardships." Even though as she says, her mother "completed high school," but "my father" had not

> received any education because of family problem. My father's sisters could not study due to family problems and also for fear of social criticism....I wish my daughters should not experience the same difficulties that I faced. (translation, life-history survey, 1993; three-teacher life-history interview, 16 May 1993)

The women in this study said, in what felt like one overwhelming voice, that they do not want their daughters to experience the discrimination against women in Nepalese society that made attaining an education such a difficult feat. *Guru-heart*, a 34-year-old unmarried Gurung woman primary (Classes 4 and 6) and secondary (Class 10) teacher of Science/Chemistry, one of eleven children of a late Gurkha soldier and his comparatively recently widowed, unschooled wife, sums up this sentiment with this story about a mother's wish:

> *We can't* follow our mother's way of living, because it is so completely different....I don't think uh it can be the same, to my parents, my way of living...because the time is different, isn't it? I know, that uh, since they, they were *uneducated*, my parents....and uh *though they wanted, they can't uh do what they wanted*, my, my mother, she still say that "*I wish I could read and write*," but she has that sort of feeling still, she lives at home, but still she says, "*I wish I could read and spend my time reading books*," because she has nothing to do, she is old, she can't work and she can't read books, she sits in the home. And sometimes when she comes here to see us she mentions this. (life-history interview, 11 May 1993)

The helping hand

'Our own family is important to us'

It required the support of the family for these women teachers to receive an education. The Nepalese secondary (History) teacher, a Brahmin woman, told this brief story about how she came to be a teacher. While she had the best command of English in the three-teacher interview and provided a brief summary of the other teachers comments in English, she added,

> [Laughing] I should speak in Nepali. When I used to study in campus, I had a desire to be a teacher, and when I become a teacher, it is easily accessible from my home, I can take care of my children in the morning and in the evening, um, it is because of these facilities I came to be a teacher in the school after finishing my graduation in B.Ed.…My family suggested me that teaching job is appropriate for women [so] I, um took a secondary school training. Ah, after that training [I] began to be a teacher. It is an inspiration of my family, I would say.…Our own family is important to us.…
>
> I have no…father. But my mother was interested.…No, she is not a teacher but she is interested to make me a teacher.…She is not educated so she wanted to give education for her daughter because she is very…interested to make some women…to give some education.…So she wanted to give education for us and she tried…her best…to make educated us. We are two sisters.…
>
> Ahn, our father was dead already. Uh, so she was helped by others.…from *neighbors* because she was alone at that time.…we were little children so she was supported by her neighbors so she wanted to give some education to her daughters.…And she tried and we also tried, some [laugh].…She's proud of us.…we…two sisters…elder sister and I [are now] teachers. (translation, three-teacher life-history interview, 16 May 1993)

This History teacher noted that though she had received encouragement from her mother, and support from neighbors, what she has achieved as a result of her own struggles was to bring a negotiable instrument to school, which she owes to nobody but herself, "there being almost no women in curriculum development" (Joshi & Anderson, 1994):

> There was no particular room in school when I was studying in primary level. There were very few (1, 2) girls in the class and the boys were few too. There were no teachers for each subject. There was no school building and we used to study in the open field. When it rained we used to go home and when it was hot [we] used to go under a tree. We used to bring our own food from home. I did not complete my formal schooling regularly in primary level. I used to go to the school sometimes and do the readings by heart. We were given only one book at a time and when we did

> that then we are given the next. This way I enrolled myself in school in grade six only. (translation, life-history survey, 1993)

She cannot forget the precarious position of her orphaned young self and writes, "My father died when I was small. My mummy and I had very hard time," and reminds us, "I have not received any help from others." She refers to "community services," "government provision," including, "foreign agencies and their resources," as those who are capable of helping others to move forward, including herself: "I have been helping others," including "*backward castes*," she emphasized, "by providing my service to adult education, day care centre, literacy and awareness raising activities...as a member of Professional Women's Club."

The striving and retreating of a military drama

In a region and a country which "brought the task of mediation" between Hindu and Buddhist cultures "to perfection" (Tucci, 1962), and "served as a relay-station" or "channel for southern influences to penetrate to the north" (Shaha, 1992), *Guru-heart* sums up an extraordinary creative ability: "I also do some of what the others cannot do" (life-history interview, 11 May 1993). *Guru-heart* is a wizard at changing perspective and at playing with levels and dials in diverse terrains: "I am not quite sure from where to start my talk," she began in a handwritten note (passed to me by a friend and colleague, another female teacher), but she was not going to let the chance for her first interview about her own life story pass her by even though she had to attend a last-minute junior Science teachers' meeting at her school. Her story is taken partly from what she has written down about herself "for the first time in my life" and from what she has told me in a subsequent life-history interview:

> I would like to start it from my early life. I was born in a village in Nepal. I have a very big family of eleven members including my parents. My father is no more with us. He passed away six years ago. He was in army in the British force. So my family had opportunity to travel overseas [to] countries like Hong Kong, Malaysia, Brunei, Singapore, etc. I completed my primary education in those countries....
>
> If I had attended one of the primary school[s] in Nepal, no doubt there would be something I didn't like such as a long way to walk, sitting on the floor...leaking thatched roof, ineffective teaching, no extracurricular

> activities, etc.…Because I received [my] primary education in comparatively good schools, I enjoyed the effective teaching, the facilities of extracurricular activities like scouting (Brownie scout, girl scout), swimming, music, dance, drama, sewing, art and craft and other various sports. (handwritten note, 5 May 1993; life-history interview, 11 May 1993)

According to Farwell (1984), "Gurkha family life grew increasingly westernized as time passed.…One manifestation of Western influence was the formation of Boy Scout, Girl Scout, Cub Scout and Brownie troops," and "it was startling to see charming, giggling Nepalese Brownies in uniform with representations of the murderous crossed *kukris* as their cap badge" (p. 149). Just as it must have been startling for *Guru-heart*, when

> after 28 years long service, my father retired. My secondary education was completed…in…Nepal.…It was very, very, uh, in very bad condition that school. Thatched roof, and in rainy season, it was always leaking, no furnishings there, we had to sit on the floor. And uh in that school, you know, for S.L.C. teacher was teaching Math, and uh Science teacher was there but was not that good, and English teachers were, none of the teachers were good, their English was worse than mine when I was in Sixth Class. (handwritten note, 5 May 1993; life-history interview, 11 May 1993)

In Nepal, "a growing group of intellectuals," from the Indian foremothers who taught Gandhi to Nepalese daughters like *Guru-heart* who read Gandhi's words to, "help make mature," female students, to Buddhists, like Sakya, are all currently "attempting to reclaim" the significance of their identities, "as providing an alternative ideology to the Brahminical Hinduism supported by the Panchayat government" (Raeper & Hoftun, 1992, p. 160).

There is consensus among those who study the psychology of optimal experience "that people develop their concept of who they are, and of what they want to achieve in life, according to a sequence of steps" (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990, p. 221). In such a "scenario building a complex meaning system seems to involve focusing attention alternately on the self and the Other," and discovering "what one can and, more important, cannot do alone" in a spiral of ascending complexity (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; see also Bee, 1987).

Like *Guru-heart* and other migrant daughters, especially but not limited to the Gurkhas, inside and outside Nepal, who managed to live "by ancient principles which [allow] a large measure of egalitarianism and personal initiative for achievement," and who "maintained their martial prowess with a simple lifestyle, largely determined by the ecology of the area they occupied" (Bista, 1991, p. 26), by going to school in Canada I felt similarly compelled to do and see some of what the others in my family and in the larger society could not do, or see in me. Geertz (1973) has also observed this desire in areas around the world:

> Desire to be recognised as responsible agents whose wishes, acts, hopes and opinions matter and it is the desire to build an efficient, dynamic modern state; it is a search for identity, and a demand that the identity be publicly acknowledged as having import, a social assertion of the self as being somebody in the world. (pp. 256-7)

In most cases, it was the father who supported and encouraged the daughter to attend school in present-day Nepal. Perhaps their fathers did but as more than one woman student teacher responded, it may have increased a feeling of uncertainty: "He did not necessarily know what would happen after sending a daughter or daughters to school."

The conflict between striving and retreating gives a 36-year-old married Gurung daughter of a Gurkha's life "sentence a military drama, but it also embodies an acknowledgement of a fundamental forward and backward movement in peoples' relations to their surroundings" (Westman, 1991, p. 17). Having taught for 15 1/2 years in the first school she was hired, a *Kanya* [all-girl] school, where she teaches Chemistry, Biology, and Physics, to Classes 8, 9, and 10, she said that her father supported her education.

Her uneducated father (a Gurkha military man who took his family overseas at different points, for instance, she was born in Singapore, and was there throughout her primary schooling) is the critical knower whom she, as so many other women teachers I encountered, has cited for structuring the where and the what of her future and its social significance:

> [My father] used to say, "it is no different for me either son go to school or daughter go to school. They are all equal for me. If you want to study either daughter or son you can study up to where I don't know, but you can study if you want....If you are not interested its okay. If you want to study, daughters can, daughters can do it, uh can study....and son can study, if you don't want to then its okay." So I studied [laugh]. (life-history interview, 22 April 1993)

While she says both her parents "are not educated....my father and mother they both went to overseas. And they knew everything. How people, uh, how foreign people live, how they do" (life-history interview, 22 April 1993). So with her father's blessing, she went on to study, but she does not immediately go and tell her parents about the next step. She waits until

> after result of SLC...and I asked my parents, "Uh, I want to do ISc," and my father asked me..."what will that do?"....He was military. So he had no idea of what his daughter is going to do. I told him that "if I join [certificate level in Science] ISc, and if I get good uh percentage in ISc, I can become a doctor." After my teacher's advice, I thought that it would be much better, I think, if I become a doctor....[My father] said, "oh, okay. If you can." And he asked me "do you have to study very hard?" and I told him, "yes." [Laugh]. Then he said "okay, its okay, if you want to be a doctor and you can study hard then you can become a doctor, you can even join ISc." So I joined ISc. (life-history interview, 22 April 1993)

She says she has seen both girls and boys upon the threshold—and thresholds and turning-points in initiation rites mark, symbolically, life and death (Westman, 1991)—of what she identifies as a culturally critical experience:

> Well, you know, most of the uh girls and boys, especially in teen age...they cannot think what they are doing, if they are doing right or wrong, they cannot think, so they go over there and they, uh, how do you say, uh, they spoil their future. Especially girls....After 14 years, 15 years, at that time they become beautiful [laugh]....And, um, at that time boys like them [laugh]....And they do not know what is right or what is wrong. So [pause] they cannot think what is wrong and what is right. (life-history interview, 22 April 1993)

I asked her: "Were you like that when you were 14 or 15?" And she said,

> *No, no, no.* When…I saw most of the girls like that….at that time, they, you know have not arranged marriage, they can uh, they choose the boy and they got married, and after getting married, no future, just staying at home having baby, doing nothing, having husband, doing nothing. (life-history interview, 22 April 1993)

Pressing her for an answer, she responds, "I don't know why," and then she gives an "ideal" image of herself as a young girl: "My, my, I used to spend all my time in study, so I think I didn't have time *to think here and there*" (life-history interview, 22 April 1993). What does she mean *here and there*? There is some freedom of movement suggested in the phrase that she seems to have experienced in contradictory terms, particularly, when she repeats, "I didn't get chance, I didn't get chance" (life-history interview, 22 April 1993). I come along and I am the (exact) same age as she is: Both of us now mothers and teachers. Each of us a character nested within our own contexts/dreams: "Yeah, you, you in Canada…for Ph.D you came to Nepal….But if we want to do Ph.D like that we didn't, we don't get chance" (life-history interview, 22 April 1993). Yet through our stories *is* a common *disposition* among the protagonists (heroines) as we walk from kitchen to classroom. I wondered out loud then, still realizing that what my brothers did and did not have to do had much to do with a boundary of outside/inside the house, so I ask: "Did your brothers have to do housework?"

> Mm, actually at that time my youngest brother was at —, only my middle brother, second brother was at home, he used to help….if we need something from the shop we don't have to go to the shop, we have to ask them, please bring these things, and they used to bring them. So we didn't have any more time, wasting time, here and there, walking with those boys and girls like that. So, I used to think that these girls are spoiling their future….Uh, they used to make themselves beautiful [laugh], wasting their time instead of studying. When they get their marks in exam, they get very poor marks. *So I feel very bad at that time*. (life-history interview, 22 April 1993)

And in her story (which she has framed as "no story") of how she came to be a teacher, for she wanted to be a doctor, she speaks the words that she would now speak to the young girls who cannot see that they are on the threshold of "spoiling their future":

> I used to say, "don't do this. If you want to, uh, if you don't want to do any job in future, one day you will become wife, after becoming wife you will become mother, and then you will have to look after your children. At

> that time what will you do? If your children ask you, 'mother please help me in this question. I don't know this question. Please help me.' Then you will say I don't know anything. At that time what will you do? So, you can prepare yourself for being a mother....So you can help in that way, like that." So at that time I used to think, see those girls, *and I used to feel very bad*. They're spoiling their future. So... (life-history interview, 22 April 1993)

Here, her narrative transcends the time of the present/past, weaving in the imaginal, making it seem as if she said the very things she wanted to hear someone say as a young girl.

I asked her, remembering a minefield, "So *your* parents let you study all day?" She responded,

> Not *all day* [laugh], most of the time...I used to help my mother at home....And I have elder sister, and we, both of us, we help my mother and we help my small sisters and brothers. I have...two brothers and two sisters younger than me. At that time they were very small. We have to look after them, look after the house, after waking up in the morning uh my sister and me help my mother at home. And after her lunch we go to school and after 4 we come to home and do our homework, again helping my mother with her household, looking after our sisters and brothers. (life-history interview, 22 April 1993)

She wrote, privately, in the questionnaire, that she wants now to be a "perfect teacher," despite the fact that, as she says to me in her classroom, where she has led me and where we are sitting in student desks and constantly being interrupted by girls in the hallway,

> Nobody appreciates teachers in Nepal [laugh]....They used to say that in every countries, teachers are in very high favour, but in Nepal why no, they used to say?...If you don't get job, if you don't get easily job, then you can easily get teacher's job. They used to say. (life-history interview, 22 April 1993)

Ruddick (1989/1990) notes, "perfectionism can crush a mother's capacity to appreciate herself or her child" (p. 100). And if we extend such understanding to teacher as mother:

> Mothers are not free from competitiveness with their children or from resentment, fear of high spirits, and a host of other emotions that could stand in the way of delight. Mothers often know this, I believe. Repeated stories, scrapbooks, and pictures inscribe publicly a mother's delight so that it can become part of a child's sense of herself, surviving the daily preoccupations, resentment, narrowness, anger, and competitiveness of the mother herself. (Ruddick, 1989/1990, pp. 100-1)

I asked this teacher, "why did you decide to work outside the home?" She did not have an answer. "Did your mother work outside the house?:

> *Gurung teacher:* No. She had seven children, *how could she*? [Laugh]. How can she work outside?
>
> *Linda:* So where did you get this idea that you were going to be this different uh woman who is not like your mother but you're going to get a job and you're going to have a family; you're going to do all those things? How did you, where did you get that idea from?
>
> *Gurung teacher:* Well, I don't know. [Laugh]. I cannot, I cannot say. (life-history interview, 22 April 1993)

Parents: 'They were—too—much interested'

The Magar teacher who has retired from twenty years service in the same *Kanya* (all girls, public) school in which the 36-year-old married Gurung teacher serves begins here to tell what she will elaborate on about the significance of having a good family in terms of optimal experience:

> When...I was doing my IA, my grandfather said, "you must become a nurse." He might have fought in the Second World War and he might have seen the nurses, you know, foreigners, you know, with all their uniform helping....Then he said, "you know in the foreign country there are so many [female] foreigners you know doing this job and that job, you become a nurse." Then I said, "okay." I filled the form and all, uh, once I went to hospital and saw, you know, I couldn't stand, I said, "I'm sorry, I'm not going to do this job, I won't become a nurse, you know." I said, "I was not sure." [But grandfather said,] "Then you are going to be a teacher!" I said "not teacher"....I thought teaching was a very bad job, you know....Then later when I did my B.Ed. and all, then I said, "okay, I'll like to be a teacher." (life-history interview, 17 May 1993)

A 48/49-year-old married Gurung woman, in the three-teacher interview, who teaches Science to Classes 8, 9, 10 had filled out the questionnaire along with B.Ed. in-service teachers during a (7 to 9 a.m.) morning class held at a regional campus of Tribhuvan University. Because of her migrations between Nepal-India, she had left a number of the answers blank. She was the teacher who suggested then that I come to her (primary/secondary) government school to get her full story and the story of the other two women teachers at the school. When I showed up a few weeks later, she was overjoyed:

> My uh parents were migrated from uh Nepal to India and uh that was the reason that uh my father wanted to teach us. Because at that time there was no education in Nepal....in remote area. And my father...was in military....And he could not give uh education when he returned back from military [in India]. He could not give education because there was not education in Nepal, there was no school. So, we, we migrated to India.

> He took all [nine children] there and uh we all got education there. His aim…was only to give education and then I should get them back here but we all could not [get] back here.…
>
> I'm the youngest one, I'm married…my um husband, he was serving here in Nepal.…And um I could got the opportunity to come in Nepal. That was my family history.…And my father was, he was very anxious to…teach us.…Father and mother, both were not educated but they were interested that I, we should get education. *They were—too—much interested*.…
>
> My elder…sisters they could not get education, high education because…we were living in [Nepalese] village at that time.…
>
> I got my education in India, and there, um, when I studied in high school. Making my principal an ideal, she was a lady teacher and with that ideal lady teacher, I wished to be a teacher. To teach in school. To be a teacher. And then, um, after graduating in B.Sc. I started to teach young kids. In India.
>
> And then I got married. I came Nepal. After coming to Nepal, uhn, we need employment—both husband and wife should work. Now it is difficult. What I should do for it? And I like teaching job. Ahn. And I again started teaching job. My husband also likes teaching job. It's easy. No need to go far from house. I can finish my domestic chores and can come to school. Again, after school I can do domestic chores. I can do all the domestic chores, can take care of children. So I accepted teaching job. (translation, three-teacher life-history interview, 16 May 1993)

'I try to be like my father'

A 22-year-old Rai teacher and apprentice school administrator in her family's private boarding school said that her father inspired her to be a teacher. Writes Shaha (1992),

> it is with the Kiratas that the chronicles reach slightly more solid ground above the boggy realm of myth and legend. The Kiratas have a good deal more than the shadowy existence of their predecessors in the chronicle accounts, for they still exist. The Rais and Limbus of eastern Nepal are collectively known as Kiratis to this day. The Kiratas are also celebrated in the well-known Hindu epic, the *Mahabharata* and in the *Puranas* as a hill-tribe with remarkable skill in archery and warfare. (p. 8)

Occasionally the Rai teacher smiles and her face opens up like a calm sea, moods flit across her face like clouds across the face of a mountain. As a dutiful daughter she answers to an adult's directions; as a girl she turns to teaching and measures herself against her father; as a student intellectual she recounts painful details of campus life; as an articulate, adult member of the intelligentsia she defines the terms of gender, draws careful distinctions, and does not sidestep my question about whether it is good or bad that men in Nepal are more likely to be more highly educated than women; as an angry young woman she decries the fact that women are meant merely to do housework, as if in some prison;

and as a woman who wishes to adopt the unfortunate she wishes to be remembered as a dedicated teacher:

> Um, well, when I was in school I wanted to become a doctor like all the students in my class they wanted to become doctor....But what happened was uh, after I finished my high school then, uh, my dad, he wanted to come to — and start a school....
>
> And, uh, the whole family we came here and with all our belongings and then, uh, the idea was after my SLC and before I joined college, uh, I would have six months free. I mean, uh, only after six months the results would be out so, um, my dad, uh, told me that I could teach in the school during that time...and after that I could join college and then leave teaching. Just to gain some experience about the outside world, my dad wanted me to, uh, take up teaching Class 6 and 7. And, uh, [clears throat] during those, uh, months I taught Class 6 and 7 and after that, uh college started and I joined college but, um, that year [1987] in college was very uh [pause] I mean, well the classes were not regular. All the time strikes were going on, hunger strikes, the campus would be closed, the teachers would not come....And uh [very loudly] *later I used to go to college and then there used to be no class. I used to sit there with my friends all the time doing nothing and here my family* [laugh] *was working so hard* [laugh]. I mean the school was ours, there was the hostel and they have to, I mean they had to look after the school and hostel and everything, the boys, the girls. And then I felt...guilty because, [loudly] *I was there, sitting there at the college doing nothing and my family was working so hard.*
>
> My father suggested that I should...join privately campus. And then I could teach in the school and help in the hostel...and from that time on, I've been studying privately up till now. And the rest of the time I have to do teaching.
>
> [Begins loudly] *When I started teaching* [7 years ago] I thought that teaching was *my line*, you know. *I mean I was good at it* so I wanted to become a teacher [laugh/smile/audible breath exhaled]. At that time I knew in those 6 months that I would be better off as a teacher rather than a doctor....
>
> My father took me to the school and I taught Class 6 that day, 6 and 7. And one of the students, my father and mother, they didn't tell me the name but one student, commented that I taught even better than my father [laugh/chuckle]....
>
> So that I think was the main thing, you know, I mean I got sort of [voice gets quieter and slower] inspiration in this line....But it's my father I look up to, the way he teaches, his dedication....the way he handles the students. I think, uh, I try to be like my father [laugh/smile/audible breath exhaled]....Uh, its different than in other schools. (life-history interview, 18 April 1993)

I asked her "would you ever consider working in other schools, for instance, in a government school?":

> Uh, no because the government school teachers they have no dedication. They just do whatever they like. They even if they go to school no one cares, even if they don't go to school, no one cares, they don't check the work...too many students....There's one government school over

> there....from the teachers, from the students we get to know...a lot....Any time they can go to school, any time they can, I mean, uh, they can bump school, anything can go. I mean they can do anything. The students, the teachers are also like that [resigned sigh]. They're not dedicated....
>
> Most principals they are...non-teaching principals in other private boarding schools. And [my father's] way of teaching is also very different....he keeps in mind, uh, the weakest student in the class....then according to that...student's...standard, he teaches in the class so that the weakest one can also understand. So...whenever there is a quarrel or a fight or something like that then...the way he talks with both parties and then the way he settles all the fights...I think no one else does it like that....Yeah, I mean he talks with both parties and then he tries to understand the main problem and both persp— [pause] and both parties and, uh, then he finds a solution. And he does not leave it just like that. Then he tells them to, I mean, be friends from now on, handshake, I'm sorry and so on....
>
> The way he, I mean, deals with the problem I like it very much. Because we've been having a lot of problems [laugh/smile/audible breath exhaled] all these years. And, uh, I think the way he handles the problem is very *extraordinary*. (life-history interview, 18 April 1993)

I asked her, "Do girls fight in the classes?" Ruddick (1989/1990) suggests "the best peace should not entirely prevent battle." This young woman answered, "uh, no, mostly its boys." What is the battle on the path to being and becoming a teacher may be shyness for one, or understanding what makes other people get so angry and/or jealous at one's ability to shine, and resolution of student conflict in the classroom and dedication for another.

The measurement of a mother's worth

From talking to women teachers in Nepal, fathers seem to be very important when I would have thought that mothers would have been more important. It seems that for some girls, fathers are often the ones who make the allowances so that a girl *can* go to school. If it is approved by the father, then, eventually, it is accepted by the mother; but *Guru-heart* interrupts me in this train of thought. She suggests it has to do with the measurement of a mother's worth:

> I think its because most of the mothers they don't earn money [laugh] and the father earns money and um in the family that happens....
>
> My father...was not the kind of person to put pressure on his children, he let us freely to make the choices, his children. My mother also, these days, because she doesn't have any idea about these things, what we are supposed to do, she, *I think she was uneducated* [laugh]. (life-history interview, 11 May 1993)

Guru-heart's father tried to act as a surrogate for both points of view:

> My father, *my father*, mmm, he is very much concerned with uh about money, you know....Most of the time I was living away [i.e., in Hong Kong, Malaysia, Brunei, Singapore, etc.] from my mother, you know?....I was living with my father [who was in the British army], and uh I didn't have chance to live with my mother since I completed my primary education. I was away so I didn't do anything with my mother....
>
> My father was always involved in his job, uh he couldn't help in schoolwork and he was not uh qualified to do that and uh, just um, I could, because I had so many [11] brothers and sisters, that I could spend time with them, with friends, we were together, and also with schoolwork, we went together to school as well. He didn't have much time to give um to children, uh, my father. I used to go in the morning and then spend time with him in the evening....That was all....
>
> Once, I found later, you know, I didn't realize that before, but after his death, it was someone who told me...that "your father was willing to make you the minister or something, that in the public works, something like involved in politics," that, that was what he really wanted I think which was to make me you know? That man said he wanted to make me minister or something like that. But I didn't know anything about it. I think uh he didn't tell me but I was interested in Sci—to join Science, to become doctor, I think he *realized my* feeling and he did not *bother* to go against my feeling. I think, as I told you that he never spoke out against our choice. (life-history interview, 11 May 1993)

As Ruddick (1989/1990) suggests, "it requires imaginative generosity—not to mention 'time out' in the midst of other duties and pleasures—to appreciate what children present" (p. 100).

Guru-heart remembers always how her father had acquired these requisite virtues in a struggle with her mother and what had been sacrificed so that he could entertain such "imaginative generosity." This did not go unnoticed by us as daughters for this question emerged out of our acts of conversing, in relationship (where I remembered an exiled memory of my grandmother's one hope for herself, she wanted a crystal chandelier in Canada, denied by my grandfather even when he could easily have afforded it):

> *Linda:* What about your mother's hopes for herself?
>
> *Guru-heart:* [Laugh/outtake of air/sigh] She doesn't want to live in the village. And because uh, she, her, you know, friends, you know, they're all living in [district administration centre]....And she feels that she is the only one living in the village when she doesn't want to. And uh she said to my father why don't we buy land and make a home, house [in town] but my father did not, he said that he doesn't want to leave...the land we have is quite a lot, and because of that he does not agree with my mother. And so, um now we haven't got anything to make house here [near to the school

> where *Guru-heart* teaches]....Yeah, yeah. That's the only difference. My mother and um I wish that, I feel that I could have, we could have for my mother, that's the only problem I think. (life-history interview, 11 May 1993)

Ruddick (1989/1990) believes as I do that maternal stories are a complex genre and suggests that a mother's stories and "maternal conversations are important instruments" to piece "children's days together," to create "for herself and her children the confidence that the children have a life, very much their own and inextricably connected with others" (p. 98). At its best, such storytelling "enables children to adapt, edit, and invent life stories of their own" (Ruddick, 1989/1990).

I asked the Rai teacher "do you think that women make better teachers than men or..."

> *Beginning teacher and apprentice school administrator:* [Interrupting] Yeah I think so. In primary.
>
> *Linda:* Why?
>
> *Beginning teacher and apprentice school administrator:* Um, [pause], because, uh, there were many men teachers...when...this [man who began the school], uh he handed the school over to us...there were more men teachers than women....And uh now there are more women teachers than men. I think they are more dedicated and they are more loveable. I think being mothers they take care of children in a special way rather than men. Especially the, I mean, nursery, KGl and KG2 students they need a lot of love and affection, I mean, uh, rather than uh what do you call it...
>
> *Linda:* Discipline?
>
> *Beginning teacher and apprentice school administrator:* Yeah.
>
> *Linda:* Beatings [in a joking manner].
>
> *Beginning teacher and apprentice school administrator:* Yeah, rather than that. So I think women are better in that. And, um, their punctuality, also, women are better. They come to school uh right at ten o'clock. Some walk to school, some teachers. And even if they miss the bus, they come to school. But men teachers if they miss the bus then they stay at home [laugh]. They say that "I missed the bus, I couldn't come." When, I mean, there's no transportation, I mean, uh, when, uh, there's no bus also, women teachers, they walk to school, but men teachers they hardly come. They just say that "oh there's no transportation, I couldn't come." (life-history interview, 18 April 1993)

I asked, "Why do you think there's so few women teachers or have you ever thought about that?": The Rai teacher responded,

> Uh, I think its, I think it depends upon society also. Because, um, uh, [loudly], *women are meant to do housework, look after children, the buffalos, the cows, and everything at home, look after the children, the kitchen, and everything. And men do the outside work, the earning job. I think that's why....*[Softly] I don't know what people think about me. [Long pause]. Um, I'd like to be known as a dedicated teacher...because dedication is very hard to find in Nepal. (life-history interview, 18 April 1993)

This young Rai woman teacher is not only following her father's line she is connected to other women through her mother's stories about dedication and those who walk a lot. Descended from at least three generations of Christian soldiers, this young Rai teacher is being groomed to take over her parents' private boarding school. In her narrative, I hear her "different voice":

> *Beginning teacher and apprentice school administrator:* Uh, from school age, um, I don't want to *marry*. I just wanted to, uh, I mean uh, I mean uh when I was in school I wanted to be a doctor and then adopt many [laugh] [there's a baby crying, in the school/house compound, in the background], many children. Those who don't have any homes, parents. And I wanted to, I mean, if we, I mean if I marry and, uh, I mean have children...they would be fortunate, they would get everything but I wanted to do something for the *unfortunate*. [Laugh/smile/audible breath exhaled]. Those who don't have any parents and things like that, I wanted to help them.
>
> *Linda:* Why—what makes you special, what makes you want to help the unfortunate?
>
> *Beginning teacher and apprentice school administrator:* I think it is what the Bible teaches us [laugh/smile/audible breath exhaled].
>
> *Linda:* Uh huh [affirmative].
>
> *Beginning teacher and apprentice school administrator:* And, uh, my mother also supports me on this subject. (life-history interview, 18 April 1993)

As we talk, the young Rai woman alternates between weakness and strength, sometimes sitting back in her chair in the family sitting room, where we are served tea by a "sister" (in Nepal, members of extended families are called sisters, here I am referring to one of her cousins), with her father and brother passing through this room on their way to somewhere else. I never get a chance to meet her mother who is busy in the kitchen. But I feel her mother's presence as a role model in the service she has done as a nurse in Nepal and here I find a connection between dedication and having to walk a lot. While this daughter begins shyly, with a slight stutter to her voice, occasionally searching for the right word, remembering, smiling, she becomes more and more emphatic:

> M-m-m-other was born in Darjeeling....And then my mother came to Nepal in the '60s to study nursing....*Yeah, it was very hard at that time*. So they used to treat the nurses very, I mean, in a very good manner. All were missionaries....And they were very good, my mother even talks about that now, the times. I mean, at that time it was different. Everything was different....There were very, I mean, few nurse, nurses. And, uh, nursing was a profession which people looked down upon at that time. They didn't want their daughters to become nurses. And, uh, I mean, at that time also they were so *dedicated, missionaries*, uh, I mean, some of them are not living now but my mother talks about the people at that time. They were so dedicated....Yeah....Yes [laugh/smile/audible breath exhaled]. *They had to walk a lot!* (life-history interview, 18 April 1993)

The dedicated Rai teacher redeems her mother's significance in this story, it is not only a father's gift, this power of seeing or insight, this power of a life-giving aspect, this strength survives a particular identity. She is told by his students that she is as good or even a better teacher than him. But with the vision of both, the protagonist's circle is more fully complete. Both her parents' power has been communicated to her.

Guru-heart tells how she now identifies strongly with her mother, despite the powerful father with the gift of seeing and promoting his only daughter as a minister, but she is faced with the aspect that in the state of transformation individual human identity has no meaning:

> Mmm, um, [laugh]...my father always supported uh in giving education to girls and boys and my mother was always against it. But uh, I don't know what um I don't know what *made* me think more about my *mother*, giving more, uh thinking more about my mother than my father. My mother was very strict, she used to beat us horribly sometimes, for her I mean it was difficult to, to, and there were eleven children, you can imagine, right, it was a very difficult life. (life-history interview, 11 May 1993)

I respond: "I have one son, and I'm sorry I can't imagine [eleven children]." She says:

> [Overlapping] [Laugh] Well sometimes they went to, she had to beat us. My father never did that, I can't even remember that he gave me even one. But still I don't know why I love my *mother more* than my father [laugh], I tried to think about it, why I, feel like that [laugh] still I can't get that answer....And now, what I realize, [laugh] its, it is because I am a girl and I am a female [laugh] and well I don't know [laugh]. (*Guru-heart*, life-history interview, 11 May 1993)

Our meeting in Nepal becomes a moment in time and space when together, in conversation, *Guru-heart* and I, stopped in our tracks comparing and evaluating ourselves in our father's footsteps, and found ourselves upon a threshold of a usable, recoverable, post-patriarchal (e.g., Mahayana Buddhist) sense of an "enlightened heart" (Gross, 1993); more unconsidered, yet unconquered teachings of "how to live in that middle ground of connection" (Clandinin, et al., 1993b; see also Clandinin & Connelly, 1995 on teachers' sacred, secret, and cover stories).

'To make this my leg to strong enough': A 'sponsor-mother' because in Nepal we 'cannot stand independently'

Orphaned as a baby, and lame from polio, *Guru-aamaa's* oral lament, her singing over the bones, "to make this my leg to strong enough" (life-history interview, 4 May 1993), in the very public school staff room (and a particularly irksome place to me and to some of the other women teachers I encountered in Nepal, who would rather talk to me in a private space, in a father-less, husband-less family compound, or in rooms hidden behind other rooms) is where she has led me and where we are seated, at the back, near an open window, around two sides of a long table. But at least it is where we can be attentive to the comings and goings, we can, or at least I can (for this teacher sits with her back to the door and faces me), and she can see me watch as men enter the room, and whether my conversation changes. In spite of myself, I speak more carefully depending upon who seems to be listening. I do not want to sound foolish or "angry," and I have been angry at what I have heard from women teachers, and for the names I was called by some men in Nepal ("Hey Fatty," "Hey Delilah"), and I know how I should sound and what I need to look like in the presence of men. And I know, too, the relief when I am paired with teacher-as-mother for we may fall into conversation about our most personal stories as maternal storytellers often do.

A "sponsor-mother," one of a number of "British and German aunties," in this case, an expatriate working in a hospital in Nepal, shared in the "happy" placement of an orphan in a school where "all of them [were] orphans," students and teachers, "*all*, they got training," and as *Guru-aamaa* explains, for this sponsorship to have occurred, the orphans "got to have…good ability," and particularly for her because as she says,

> my background was very poor.…there was a big problem for me: what to do? And other people, they ask me, "now you have to work in this hospital, for you to eat and to live." And I said, "No, I have no interest in hospital work. I don't want to be a *nurse*. I'm too afraid, I cannot see the *blood* and these big diseases. I want to be a *teacher*." (life-history interview, 4 May 1993)

Guru-aamaa points out a time when her sponsor-mother was not available, she was very fortunate, "government gave me the scholarship to do that [junior teacher's] training.…And I passed nicely because I had my own *desire, aim*, to be a teacher" (life-history interview, 4 May 1993). For these orphans, expatriates acted as family, in a situation where *Guru-aamaa* reiterates, "there wasn't any idea to live my life, so that Dr. — who gave me this chance to study up to [Class] 9, so that's very great, I am certainly most grateful," and in this "school," she says, "we were not allowed to leave" (life-history interview, 4 May 1993).

Moral dreaming

Moral dreaming is the work, which I was told by one woman student teacher, was already taking place be that in a hut with one teacher and five students in Nepal, or in the imaginal. But it does present an alternate reading of the Hindu moral "order sanctioned by the rulers," wherein it is said "an individual could only hope for better in the next life" (Raeper & Hoftun, 1992), and an alternate reading of Buddhist tradition where "women have been excluded from teaching roles *because* of their conventional associations with…initiation into limited and frustrating *samsaric* [cyclic] human existence" (Gross, 1993, p. 240). An unschooled mother might sit dreaming her children up and up the ladder of learning, as the only female Dean of Education in Nepal put it:

> My mother, you know, she does not do anything [laugh]. She is illiterate. But um she is very interested to…get…her children…educated.…She used to dream every day [both of us looking out an imaginary window she has framed in a gesture], you know, "if my son, if my daughter, become so-and-so, and teacher of that college and teacher of this school [laugh]." (Bajracharya, personal communication, 2 February 1993)

Up and up the ladder of learning

When I think back upon the houses in Nepal, I remember most vividly how I had to literally, physically crawl up through a dark, narrow, and steep passageway to get to the breathing space out on the roof, and it begins to help me to understand how such a metaphor as a ladder might be extended, where human learning "may be thought of as a response to the lure of transcendence" (Phenix, 1975).[3]

In Nepal, one female student teacher saw the importance of the family as "the first school of the child," who is "like clay," and of the primary school, "the lowest ladder where the young children begin to study." This woman student teacher suggested that the "primary level is the first step of education and it should be good. Teachers play an important role to provide good education." For this woman student teacher, "education plays an important role in the life of women, and it needs universalization. Teachers play an important role in it. They can give good education and direction to the students and can make good citizens." While this woman student teacher realized that "teachers should teach the students politely in the primary school. They should love the students. Primary schooling is the foundation of a student's future life." One woman student teacher believed that teachers "should also convince the parents about the importance of education who do not send their children in school." Another saw this as the level at which provision "to enhance…primary education there should be a…recruiting [of] the best teachers in schools," to which a third meant "women should get priority in the universalization of primary education." This woman student teacher also revealed that "women teachers play an important role in primary schooling.…They can even convince people about education visiting door to door."

The whole idea of linking the community/school/women's practices, which is not new, but is a revival of an ancient practice in the cultural transmission of Hinduism (King, 1987; Joshi & Anderson, 1994), has been evaded in the dominant discourse on teachers and teacher education reform in Nepal. The story of the full humanity of women in Nepal and elsewhere is not fully known; the story about the relationship between the female body and the cosmos is being written and rediscovered (e.g., see Allen & Mukherjee, 1990; Christ, 1980, 1987; Gross, 1993; Liddle & Joshi, 1986/1989; Ruether, 1983).

For those governments or aid agencies "employing and managing education systems and structures for a range of social, economic and political ends" (Measor, 1994), what Nepalese women teachers as subject to such directives suggest in story, above all, is that there is no unitary vision among those responsible for development in Nepal. Measor (1994) explains:

> Social policies have a variety of outcomes for women and clearly affect their rights and opportunities across a number of sectors. It is possible to speculate that not all outcomes of investment in educational development and growth are entirely predictable and may have long-term implications for the lives of both women and men and the relationships between them that the developers did not originally intend. (p. 118)

The stories Nepalese women teachers tell about their own lives in education is something unique to the international debates within what Bateson (1989) has called "temple precincts," what Hildebrandt (1994) suggests "was for the good of all/ even if all had not been heard." Like these daughters of Nepal, and daughters of other places in time and space, I, too, see that "women have lived in the interstices," of stories of heroic men, like Rama, and heroines, like Sita, and the "incredible effort" needed to "slide…sidewise" to fit their stories, "in a world where women's stories rarely have been told from their own perspectives," and that there grows a yearning for stories told about how to move between places, to progress, to see the possibilities in diverse places (see Chitrakar, 1995), and the problems, from women's perspectives (Christ, 1980, pp. 4-5; Johnston, 1973).

Women student teachers in Nepal suggested that the primary school, like the family, is a kind of mortar used to build upon. According to this woman student teacher, "it is the base for higher education." As women being and becoming teachers describe home, school, community, and so forth, and their relationship to these terrains, they see the girl child as a human being held in bondage, as a daughter of captivity. "Social bondage," according to this in-service woman teacher in Nepal, is only escalated by "lack of training, lack of priority and language problem....conservative thinkings." Given these difficulties the movements to and from home were emphasized.

'My story about the quarrelsome little girl who got to go to school' in the valley

A Home Science specialist who is now working as "a government servant" in service of the women of Nepal told an impromptu story about herself as a young girl at the end of a background interview (which she agreed to but which she did not allow me to audiotape, and which did not elicit much more than the government line about the current welfare approach of women's education projects in Nepal). Her enthusiastic response to my sincere interest in the promise of her story confirmed the potential of the open-ended structure to begin my interviews with Nepalese women teachers. From this point on, I would begin to build a feeling of trust that I could ask all the teachers to tell me the story of how they came to be a teacher and then leave a space for them to answer in their own way:

> I was at the age where I should have been in grade two in Kathmandu. My friends couldn't play with me, they had to study. I wanted to go to school like them, but my parents *didn't see the need* for me to go to school, only for my brother to go. I became so "quarrelsome" that they let me go.
>
> I gathered up the material that the other children were studying and did the homework and showed my parents. They finally agreed to let me go. Now they are proud of me. (personal communication, 28 January 1993)

Two sides at least to every story: The hill country

Farwell's (1984) history chapter about the Gurkhas' hill home and family reveals that "when the young men" left the hill-sides and "joined the [British or Indian] army they were exposed to a world of new experiences, but to adapt they had only to do as they were told; the army took care of them" (p. 150). Life *was* more uncertain and held more difficulties for the brides and the daughters who came down from the hills to join them in *Guru-lekhika's* story. For those left behind and for those who joined their husbands or lived with their fathers:

> How did they feel and how did they react? We don't know. No Nepalese woman has ever written about her life as an army bride. This is not surprising, perhaps, but it is curious that no Englishman or Englishwoman ever tried to discover and record the thoughts and feelings of these young women. (Farwell, 1984, p. 150)

Guru-heart played with the dials when as a girl back home in Nepal she is supposed to be thinking of marriage after SLC. Telling her story as a teacher to a teacher-researcher, she tuned into a polyphony of voices; sometimes she pointed out how she did not listen to those with whom she was most intimately concerned, searching for ways to provide balance, to maintain/to add in the clarity of her own focus, she very much included them:

> My focus was on, *only on*…somehow [to] complete my education and then help my parents. My main focus was *that* and I didn't think of getting *married* at that time.…Because uh, you know, I was always concerned with my parents, how hard they had been working to, to bring up the whole family of 11 members. I could realize, and uh it just so happened that uh I started to think about uh the family cond—, *about my parents*, because I regard them very much as who, why I am and felt like that. And uh, I didn't have any *interest* [wry smile/outtake of air] in this *marriage matter*. That's why I think…I didn't think of it.…because I didn't, I didn't *care* and they *were* giving *pressure* but uh after sometimes they also gave up because I didn't listen to them about this matter [laugh]. (life-history interview, 11 May 1993)

The neighbor women in her mountain village "filled my mother's ears (who herself is also an uneducated woman) with the belief that it is not wise to educate girls" (from handwritten note, 5 May 1993). In our subsequent interview, I asked her to speak about that:

> Mm, I was always against that, you know? [Laugh] But at that time I'm not, not, not that mature that I could convince my *mother* that what they are saying is not the right thing. But uh I was always against them but uh, uh, well [laugh] I couldn't convince my mother at that time. But my father did try and he was also against what they say. (life-history interview, 11 May 1993)

When people in Nepal, that is, when neighbors talk, it makes a difference to what girls can do, *if the neighbors are heard to speak out. Guru-heart* responded with emphasis to my wondering out loud: "*Yes, that's right, that's right*" (life-history interview, 11 May 1993).

Guru-heart echoes the significance of the father, who "did not care and turned a deaf ear to my mother" (from handwritten note, 5 May 1993)—and Gurkha women "were also said (by men) to be prone to intrigue" (Farwell, 1984)—who could convince her *mother* that what the village women were saying against the education of daughters

> is not the right thing. But uh I was always against them but uh, uh, well [laugh] I couldn't convince my mother at that time. But my father did try and he was also against what they say.…to educate the children, he can go

> without food or he can do *anything* like that. [Much louder] *I thought that if I could* [quieter] save some money, my father could spend some for his own sake. And even though when I went [to campus for further education,] when my friends, they were inviting for picnic and so, I had to spend some money for that, at that time we need to spend only 20 Rupees and at that time 20 Rupees was also a lot for us, for a student…you know? So I thought instead of spending…on picnic I could save…to buy useful things, like books, and other things, and so that's why I didn't go. And regarding clothing also, you know, when they are on the campus, you know, the girls…they go in the best dress, they do that, but I never did that. I had two sets of uniforms…sari…cheap materials…I managed with those two sets [laugh/sharp outtake of air]….[Much louder] *I also wanted to experience what hard time is like* [laugh]….*Wanted to* [laugh]. You know, because uh my….early life was not that hard, you know, I told you that we'd been to many, many different countries and had a good time and I hadn't experienced hard times so I wanted to do that at that time and I had to experience it, what its like. (life-history interview, 11 May 1993)

"And did you experience it," I asked her, "Yeah!" she replied. Her father was a significant member, a social reformer, of the mountain village which her mother never left though it was her heart's desire to move into town along with the other military wives. And while her father took his daughter to various countries during his tenure as a Gurkha, he did not always take his uneducated wife. Her father helped to establish a secondary school in another village, and he not only donated funds for a drinking water project in "our village….He himself was fully involved in this project to function" (life-history questionnaire, 1993). According to Shaha (1993), "Nepal has a valuable human resource in retired soldiers….With their background of training and the skills they have acquired, they are a great potential for social change" (p. 26). But what about the valuable human resource in their wives and daughters? Before this, no one ever thought it worthwhile to climb into the hills of Nepal where they live to find out (see Farwell, 1984, pp. 150-1).

'The first lady who came to work outside of the house'

According to Farwell (1984),

> Polygamy (now forbidden) was once permitted and a man could have as many wives as he could afford, but most young Gurkhas could afford only one. Those who had two usually left the oldest wife (*beahita*) in Nepal and took the youngest (*leahita*) to the regiment with them. However, marriage usually did not put an end to casual sexual encounters. (p. 147).

Guru-lekhika's family story is a history from a female perspective of sheer necessity/survival; one of her own extended family members most recently threatened her with "death" if she did not vote a certain way in the upcoming election. Presently planning to write her life and her passage through what she said is now regarded by the younger ones as a distant past into a novel, what *Guru-lekhika* told me deserves to be told in much of its entirety for it serves to set the primary school context in a family context of pre-democratic history. She realizes her life as a displaced daughter in and outside of Nepal is valuable to be told to those who wish to take her work and life "to women becoming teachers":

> My mother uh and, uh I had *three mothers*, you know, in our caste....we had big houses and all, also I have not seen....And in our uh caste, actually, the men they used to marry three, four, or five or like that, you know. Like, uh you can say this uh the royal family they do like that....they used to follow it. And uh the...women in our society, they never go out to work. And, uh, but in those days when in Nepal there was no education uh provided for the girls, at that time...only our caste, they uh could provide education for their girls....They used to call the teachers in their own home....and the teachers used to teach there....Boys they could go out for study, and for the girls no, they were not allowed to go outside of their house. They could take the education and other extra activities all in their own home....you know?
>
> So in my family also, my mother and she could write, read, I mean, the religious book, and she could write the letters, and but uh they were not allowed to, uh, for further study they were not allowed, you know....They used to study Nepali and Sanskrit....
>
> I was born in India, because my father...was in Indian army....you can say it is British army, you can say, but later on it was divided into two groups and one is Indian Army and British Army....He was again shifted to Indian Army. So their environment made me uh study, because here uh if I would have been in Nepal, I think, uh, my family they wouldn't have send me for study and all. But I got the opportunity to study because I saw my uh friends they were going to school and the neighbors' children, they were also going to school, because India was more developed than Nepal. (life-history interview, 29 April 1993)

In Nepal, *Guru-lekhika*, daughter of an aristocratic Gurkha stationed in India and one of his three wives, names herself from the beginning:

> Actually I had no intention to become a *teacher*. But uh in my family, you know, we are, uh, though we are not uh directly linked to the King and the Queen....and we don't have...this uh *royal blood* you can say....but...the King belongs to the same caste...like me. (life-history interview, 29 April 1993)

This caste affiliation is "here in Nepal...before this...you can say this...till last year," and it is here in her long pauses and selectivities (searching for the right words) that I begin to notice how *Guru-lekhika* "provides a dramatic example of slippage" (Casey, 1988; Popular Memory Group, 1982). She recited her whole life story without any reference to democratic uprising in Nepal, and like so many of the other Nepalese women teachers, left a gap around (before and afterward) the 1990 regaining of democracy in Nepal. She leaves these gaps and presents us with a picture of Nepal that may suggest it has not changed all that much.

I gradually came to understand what she meant after in a conversation that took place in a village tea shop where she has taken me away from the school for an hour and where we are seated alone at a small table (journal entry, 29 April 1993). *Guru-lekhika* said one of the male teachers at her school approached her as if she were not very veiled blue blood, in a satirical yet also threatening vein, while she was out enjoying an early morning constitutional walk alone. He said to her, "oh you have to exercise too, some people must have eaten too much" (journal entry, 29 April 1993). This *Guru-lekhika* understood as a criticism against her body and spirit and that of her aristocratic ancestors, her high-born caste affiliation and its supposed overturn, based on the assumption that control of economic resources "property (cash and kind)" is the aperture of perspective. In Nepal, "female self-reliance is barely feasible, in spite of their high economic participation rate" (Joshi & Anderson, 1994). What this teacher said had very little to do with the exigencies of *Guru-lekhika's* present and past family situation. *Guru-lekhika* says her own creative acts and energy sustained her through the rush and fury of tempestuous times: "Oh sometimes I used to dance. Oh, I forgot to tell you that I was very keen to dancing and drama and sing song all these things" (life-history interview, 29 April 1993). I asked her "What made you start writing and composing songs?":

> Because uh through my childhood I had seen many things in my family, you know. So, um, and the environment and how the people were treating us, you know? And how um the people were treating us and how we were neglected by the people....and how our own relative also neglect us. And

> what difficulties I had to face, you know....and when I saw my mother. And once...three women and my mother and we were in the same house, my father in the same house and there was all this fighting. My mother, she never used to fight, you know. But other women they used to fight and they used to make a very, uh, you can say, not a good *scene* in the house. (life-history interview, 29 April 1993)

In order to create, as a woman teacher who is also an author, a singer, a dancer, a wife, a mother, and a daughter herself, she must steal time and space away from her husband and daughter, from her own mother, for inherent in writing her story is the desire to feel at home:

> I had seen in my home the life of my mother and my family due to my father, though he was from a very rich family background, but still he was spending money like anything after women, woman and all....It made me very angry. Then I thought it was because of him that we are not getting....proper education and food and clothing, all. So my mother always used to tell that "No your father is a very good man, no? It is our duty, it is being a wife. I shouldn't go against saying," she used to tell like that. But I was really aggressive in regarding this matter. (life-history interview, 29 April 1993)

Gift-giving in return for the trouble of making the journey

The doorway, the window, to being and becoming a teacher peers into a garden, where there are children, the next generation growing, and who require of their teachers certain sacrifices. Is this perhaps what one woman student teacher also meant? She revealed that the door which opened to her the path of educational development was not demand of payment for the gift itself, rather it was seeing gift giving in return for the trouble of making the journey to being and becoming a good teacher:

> I want to be a good teacher. I was influenced from my primary schooling where some of the teachers practiced favouritism and some teachers were concerned [more] to earn money than in teaching. I had a feeling that this kind of attitude does not foster...educational development. So I decided to be a teacher and bring good atmosphere in teaching.

The idea of duty and service to the people of Nepal is expressed in the narrative of a 41-year-old unmarried Social Studies/English/Health Education mountain village Gurung woman teacher, who has taught for 23 years: "Teaching is like a service and makes it easy to serve people and the village. So I decided to be a teacher" (life-history interview, 28 May 1993). One of two daughters of a Gurkha and his illiterate wife (no sons in this family to take care of them), this teacher says, "I got inspiration from my father to study. He said, 'You must go to school. You must study!'" (life-history interview, 28 May 1993). The elder sister studied only up to grade 7 and is "only literate" according to her younger sister, whose father also told her "you go to school, you should study" (life-history interview, 28 May 1993). But as she adds, her sister took no interest because she had no female "study-mate." At that time, there were few girls going to school, and as her elder sister had no girl friends who went to school, she lost the heart to do it alone.

One woman student teacher wrote, "I used to think, I should be like someone when I was young. But there is no such person today. I am inspired by [Mother] Teressa, Florence Nightingale and want to be one of those." Two student teachers responded: "I was influenced by a woman teacher who played an important role to make many people literate in the village."

This in-service woman teacher wrote:

> I wanted to be like a friend of mine who got the highest position in her first year at campus and got a scholarship. She was very pleased and everybody appreciated her. I just passed; I could not be like her; I was not appreciated and I was not happy too. That is why I desired to be like her.

'I became a teacher because I was an orphan' (Guru-aamaa, 1993)

Guru-aamaa said something I did not expect to hear (but it is a recurrent theme in these teachers' narratives and so I have emphasized the particular words which reoccur in my act of listening). This sense of who might be listening in is also captured in the much more intimate discourse revealed in her private, written words in a life-history questionnaire: "I became a teacher because I was an orphan...*to be independent*" (life-history questionnaire, 1993). She does not name ethnic group and/or caste affiliation and talks about being temporally and spatially, though not legally, divorced from a "forced marriage"—an objectified security structure, wherein the heart does not lie—with her Brahmin husband, whose name she has taken but which she does not seem to have taken on as her authentic identity. *Guru-aamaa* writes late at night at home in a life-history questionnaire (1993) private thoughts on paper: "I want to say that let not my daughter get a husband like mine and suffer like me." *Guru-aamaa's* term "lame" and her story brings back the history of the Aryan impact on women: as in the *Mahabharata* "women were also classed with dwarfs, humpbacks, lean, lame and blind men, idiots and eunuchs, as unfit to attend the king's court" (Liddle & Joshi, 1986/1989, p. 62; see also Mahabharata [Shanti Parva], in Rudra, 1975, p. 43).

One woman student teacher wrote: "When I was young I had a desire to become a teacher when I saw young women teaching younger kids effectively." For another,

> When I see more educated urban women being teacher and helping enhance education I also wanted to be a teacher and work in a village. Because Nepal is full of villages. It would be useful to serve the village people.

There are no published stories so these women student teachers are influenced by what they see. One woman student teacher noted, "I was influenced by a lady teacher and decided to be a Maths teacher." For another, it was when she saw "a lady teacher who was confident and [who] did not hesitate to talk to the people [about] the right thing. The educated people respected her." This woman student teacher

> was influenced by a lady teacher who was dedicated in teaching both in school and in people's home. Everybody appreciated her. She was a high school teacher. She also taught the adults in the village and brought changes in the society. Her progress made me to decide a teacher.

This woman student teacher observed:

> One of my village sister is a teacher who went to school in spite of her parents' opposition. Now she is a teacher in the village and looks after her parents. This is the reason why I decided to become a teacher and look after my parents and also teach the children in the village.

Because there are no stories, "seeing women teachers" was the decisive factor for this woman student teacher who decided "I also wanted to be one of them"; and she pointed out "I did not want to be like someone in beauty, but I wished to be like the well-educated women who were appreciated by others." This student teacher was emphatic: "*I want to be independent. I want to be exemplary, [a] model to challenge the fact that the girls should not be provided education. I want to show the society that the girls can do something.*"

I had observed women student teachers sitting together and conferring in a larger circle of four or five or in a closer knit group of two or three while filling out my questionnaires outside on the grassy plain of a regional campus of Tribhuvan University. I was not surprised. In Canada, not only my life of intimate exile but critical theories give momentum to this essence to create time, space, and family, and I was trying to bring together what has been cast aside and torn asunder in schools of thought: the feelings which occur amongst women speaking to and dreaming with one another which cannot always be sustained when they are apart. In that scenario, this woman student teacher produced an exquisite imaginal and well-thought-out sensate rendering:

> I would like to choose teaching profession. Because a teacher is like a potter who makes beautiful potteries with clay. The teacher also makes the delicate young children capable to be good citizens of the country. This is the most important work I believe.

For this woman student teacher "to be a good teacher" she "was influenced by a woman teacher who worked for the good of others." While for another who also desires "to be a good teacher," she wrote, "I have been influenced by my parents in my decision." This woman student teacher has "been influenced by the people who always suggested me to be good who themselves were good *and* educated."

For this Nepalese woman student teacher that is also her work in the here and now, in as much that "education has great importance today. *The world is dark without education*," adding in this corollary, "I wanted to be a teacher because I thought teaching is an easy job for women." Further to this, adds another,

> *I decided to be a teacher, because—there were other women teachers in the village*; a woman cannot do more labour and hard work; it does not need higher training; and one need not go far from the house.

Walking without stumbling

Seeking a path to self-respect and independence

A Nepalese in-service woman teacher noted that she chose teaching as it offered a path to "self-respect and independence." This is a story terrain to be reclaimed from the rocks and their shadows for "when we tread in the steps of the ancient poets and sages, we may sometimes reach where their steps could no longer go—and there we stand at the edge of the radically other" (Turner, 1995, p. 60).

Over and around boulders

Many philosophical discourses in Nepal are available to explain and interpret meanings for the path taken in life. Most of the time they are blended in the spiritual and social dimension: "It is a result of the long cultural intermingling and interaction between Hindus and Buddhists" (Sakya, in Raeper & Hoftun, 1992), perspectives which

> involve as central concepts the idea that a detailed and prescribed code of daily behavior resonates harmoniously with cosmic patterns, and that going against these behavioral norms disrupts the harmony of the cosmos....Hindu and Confucian codes state explicitly that women are never to be independent, but must always be under control of a male, whether father, husband, or son....Buddhism has the great fortune to lack such a rigid and detailed code of behavior for daily living....Buddhists have often relied on Hindu or Confucian norms for gender roles, but they do not have the same cosmic significance for Buddhists that they do for Hindus or Confucianists. (Gross, 1993, pp. 141-2)

In a terrain pronounced "a tender 'yam between two rocks'" (King Prithvi Narayan Shah, in Slusser, 1982), Nepalese women's path is hemmed in by rocks and weaves over and around boulders. Andrews (1984) writes, "Rocks are very slow and have sat around since the beginning, developing powers. Rocks...can show you what you are going to become. They show you lost and forgotten things" (p. 52).

Remain conscious, intuitive, and in charge

Guru-aamaa teaches Nepali Class 4 and, since the beginning of 1993, where previously she was only allowed to teach up to Class 4 and 5, is presently teaching Home Science in 8, 9, and 10, *Practical* (Cooking and Drafting Sewing). She has been teaching for 33 years:

> I was [capable of and desirous of] studying *more* but no one was helping, ready to help me, I became a mother and uh my sponsor died already. And I was in big problem....And I was not strong enough but I started to teach....
>
> So I think if, if girls cannot take education it's so much difficult for their life, future life after marriage. If they will not marry that's okay. But if they will marry its a very big problem for them. They cannot stand independently....
>
> In village those who are very poor, *main thing* they are not getting any encouragement from the parents....most of them. Just they want *work* from the daughter....And uh, if, uh, if sometimes I have chance, I'm living in a village...many [are] coming to me and they are asking, but always I am encourage them, encouraging to *study, study*....
>
> I don't know what is the matter. That's why I am just *forcing* my daughter also, study, study, study *more*. (life-history interview, 4 May 1993)

Guru-aamaa makes a connection between spiritual strength, material support, and the physical strength of her body (which she refers to as "lame") to cross impermeable boundaries in Nepal from individual as orphan to individual as sponsor/author of the authentic self as teacher, as mother, caught within the confines of a protective yet often restrictive enclosure not of her own making. Thinking of the pain it causes to know certain things about self, about others, about the nature of the world within which she is prefigured by poverty and sheer necessity, *Guru-aamaa* has arrived, and in her own good journey from orphaned daughter to the recognition now given to her by the people in the village, she has realized that she is among some people who do not necessarily care about her, her work, her life:

> My husband is not giving me any money....when I was in the hospital, after uh my son was born, after thirteen days, when I was discharged [in a conspiratorial tone], I kept a little money myself, and some other friends also, and I had a camera that my mother...my sponsor gave me. I, I sold it and I paid the money for the hospital. So until now, from beginning, until now, no help from husband. So if I was not educated, what will happen to me then? (life-history interview, 4 May 1993)

Guru-aamaa would agree that a woman must choose to remain conscious, intuitive, and in charge of what she sees and knows, "to refuse to allow anyone to repress [one's] vivid energies" and that means "thoughts," "ideas," "values," "morals," and "ideals" (Estés, 1992, p. 112). And by this measure also, *an* orphan girl has raised herself up to the legitimate status and power of *Guru-aamaa* (teacher-mother) to serve. Nothing surprises her. She has seen it all. She is a resilient person whose nurture by her sponsor-mother and whose philosophical nature is the story even one day in her life tells.

As teacher, as mother, "I have to do *all* work and schoolwork also," *Guru-aamaa* says, summing up a day in her life, which begins at five o'clock, about the same time the day starts for all except one of the women teachers I interviewed (and the exception was 9 months pregnant). Her telling of her daily life is punctuated with ailments, "I have a very bad tummy," "dysentery," and juxtaposed with such emphatic statements as "*but I checked lots uh class tests copy also. I worked*!" (life-history interview, 4 May 1993).

She starts her day with an act of mothering in the animals' shed that gains significance in the tonal quality of her voice (which becomes very soft and very sweet sounding, one of the most personally delightful, tender moments of the day). Then she continues as if she is now also in her home, in its heart, her kitchen, "I made tea, my daughter was studying, and then I, I gave her tea" (life-history interview, 4 May 1993). I cannot help thinking that here she may also be briefly echoing Christ's (1980) analysis of nature and Ruddick's (1989/1990) analysis of nurture "as a place where women," particularly as mothers, "can make contact with the meaning and power withheld from them in society" (Casey, 1993, p. 35). *Guru-aamaa* celebrates what beauty there is in existence, the wonders of an interior life, and external connections despite being surrounded by unanswerable questions, ambiguous dilemmas, and the certainty of loss and death: In nature and nurture, "the life and death forces are intertwined. Every individual is finite and eventually must die, but life also re-creates itself from death" (Christ, 1980, p. 10).

A day in the life of Guru-aamaa

I woke up
I went into the animals' house
I have a nice, tiny baby cow, calf, two days ago, she was born
I went to see her and
I gave her mother food and grass
And the baby started to drink milk,
mother's milk,
And I have some chickens, I gave them food
I made tea
My daughter was studying
I gave her tea
I drink tea myself
My husband is going to his work early in the
morning at 5 o'clock also
After that I sat and we prayed, daughter and son
Three in one room for ten minutes
After that I started the cooking
My daughter started to sweep the floor
I gave them food
*Rice and cabbage **tarkari***
*Tomato **achar** and black **daal***
We sat together and we ate
And then I was in a hurry to come to school
Half past nine, First period
I had class 4B, craft
Learning to make bag, nice bag to hang and put some letters in
Second period
Exam is coming from Friday
So I said this is a time, good chance
Some questions I asked from Science,
Health, and Social Studies
I had free period, Period 3
I checked exam papers
*Fourth period, I went home to eat my **kaja** tiffin*
Bread, tea, and butter
But suddenly when I was coming up here,
Period Five, to be interviewed
I met Academic Dean
"One of the teachers is sick, could you take Period six?"
I said, yes, I'm going for an interview, after that
I'll take it
Four o'clock
My classroom is the very smallest classroom
I have to put everything in order
Class must be tidy
I'm coaching the children
Some of the students are very weak in any subject
I'm helping them
I do that for free, any subject
I go home sometimes right after four when I am very tired
Sometimes half past four, sometimes quarter to five, five o'clock
When daughter is not home then I have to make everything
My son is coming and going to play football, volleyball
So I'm alone from four o'clock to seven o'clock
in the evening
My husband is a very big drinker, ask anyone
*So I have to do **all** work and schoolwork also*
Housework, lesson planning, and cooking,
whatever I have to do, washing,
Never is fixed time
Because I have to make lesson plan
Sometimes when I'm free and feeling a bit healthy
And strong enough
I am making one whole week lesson plan
It's good for me
They're coming just this way
Sometimes, it takes me time
Because children are not so good, I have to make change in plan
Eleven o'clock, my bed time
Ten o'clock, if I'm not so well and tired
Sometimes two o'clock because I have to check students' copywork
I like teaching very much
Especially to the little children
*My qualification is just **fit** for junior classes*
I gave my private SLC when daughter was born
When I was 28
And then I'm happy, I'm happy

—from life-history interview,
4 May 1993

Guru-aamaa "is not only oriented to great powers, but is also supported by them just as the ground provides a place on which to stand" (Christ, 1980, p. 10). *Guru-aamaa's* story elucidates why *sponsor-mother* is an important and timely metaphor to come out of women teachers' narratives in Nepal: if daughter as teacher (borne across mother) is a migrant, in her case, sponsor-mother, for the orphan, is an important part of that ground. In the context of UPE in Nepal she stresses two points: 1) "*Time to teach*" and 2) "*The main thing, I think, uh, the people must have encouragement, some people*" (life-history interview, 4 May 1993). She tells us, not every collection of people living and working together is a family, not every common dwelling-place, learning space, and working space is yet built and thought where those who come after can feel at home, body and soul. As Estés (1992) says, so would *Guru-aamaa* agree that a woman must choose wisely to remain conscious, intuitive, and "in charge of the fiery light that sees and knows." To remain conscious, intuitive, and in charge, also expresses what Tillich (1968) meant by "grounding" in what Lessing (1954/1970) meant by "forces or currents of energy," which "orient and ground women's quest" (Christ, 1980). This I rediscovered in Haughey's (1993) apt metaphor for the flow which exists in terrain between the teacher and student: "affection for place…focus on the ground, the context which shapes and is shaped by us…not somewhere else…our 'here.'" *Guru-aamaa's* compelling force "to study, study, study *more*" is derived from the ground of her being "here," is "being itself" (Tillich, 1968), is a woman's place. It is what she expresses most keenly in terms of those in her care, her commitment to those she loves to teach.

Change of heart stories

The quest motif has a long history: "Women's social quest concerns women's struggle to gain respect, equality, and freedom in society—in work, in politics, and in relationships with women, men and children" (Christ, 1980, p. 8). As Gailey (1987b) writes, "passage through culturally identified critical experiences is more important than physical aging, since such transitions involve becoming more fully human" (p. 8; see also

Diamond, 1974; Landes, 1971; Radin, 1971). As well, "there are societies where gender is seen as substance that flows through life among people, turning them from women to men and vice versa" (Gailey, 1987b, p. 8; see also Meigs, 1976; Swaney, 1990). Nepalese women provide some evidence that there is a change of heart story about what it means for a daughter to become a teacher, a civil servant, to go to school, to get a job and even not to marry and enter another's house, which is not available in the dominant discourse(s).

In a village situated in the middle hills of Nepal, less than a one day walk from the road, at the level of mothers comparing their daughters' experiences, a mother of eleven children, including an unmarried daughter, *Guru-heart*, who became a teacher, is told by her neighbors, "Your daughters are not daughters but sons," a statement which takes centre stage in her story:

> The women in my village who used to go against providing education to girls have now realised [the worth] of educating girls. Almost all my sisters are employed and supporting the family. [The village women's] daughters are struggling so those women are now repenting for not educating their girls....My [elder] brother who has his own family can save nothing to help my mother....Whenever my mother needs any help instead of asking my brother she comes to me, and I feel proud to help her. (handwritten note, 5 May 1993)

Liddle & Joshi (1986/1989) pointed out that "one of the most surprising features of the stories" featuring a "mysterious change of heart that occurs...from opposition, to acceptance, to pride at their daughters' rebellion" is in terms of the family, and notably the fathers who

> adopt a class perspective on this particular issue. The individualist mobility of the class system means that social honour can be conferred for an individual expression of personal ability which would be viewed as shameful or dishonourable [or in the story about the quarrelsome little girl who got to go to school as *didn't see the need*] for a woman under the caste system. In this way, honour can be gained from the woman's rebellion instead of lost. However, the honour can only be gained from occupations high in the class hierarchy. This is why lecturing or the civil service is acceptable for women....And the respect so hard won by the woman does not remain solely with her. The honour returns to the families who earlier had bitterly accused her of bringing them shame. (p. 106)

Change of female sex motif

There are "magical sex change" stories, particularly *Guru-heart's*, in Nepal, and also in the texts of Mahayana Buddhism—practiced in Nepal from the earliest times to the present day (Bista, 1991)—where a "girl changes herself into a man and then back into a girl again," not because she "*had to*, but because [she] *could*" (Williams, 1989; see also Gross, 1993). Women's spiritual quest reveals "awakening is followed by a *new naming* of self" (Christ, 1980). *Guru-heart:*

> [Laugh] I thought I wish I would be a boy, but now I realize that uh well its no difference being a boy or a girl, so I don't care, [laugh] I don't mind being a girl....I am proud of being a girl now. [Laugh] That's what I realize. (life-history interview, 11 May 1993)

Guru-heart as a person who has undergone the magical sex change in her village from daughter to son in taking the path to become a teacher, and while she was once not as attached to her femaleness and left it behind when skill to teach, the *dharma*, was well served by a sex change in terms of gender identification, has come full circle: "the one who perceives through enlightenment has the *dharma*, which is neither male nor female" (Paul, 1979, p. 236).

The act of mothering in the context of caring for all

Self-published author of social change and long term advocate of female education in Nepal, Neelam Basnet, suggests that her own children believe that women who parent in the same way as men are not acting the way a mother should act. As is evident from Neelam Basnet's experience, "the best-intentioned individuals can do little to transcend gender until communities support the work of mothering and the well-being of children," for "women are still held responsible for mothering and this genderization offers overwhelming economic and professional advantages to men" (Ruddick, 1989/1990, p. 45).

Neelam Basnet said that in order to act as a mother for all Nepalese women and girls she had to act like a father to her own children:

> *Neelam Basnet:* Luckily I got a very good husband who can um....understand me, yeah, has a very good understanding and sometimes my kids, they feel very bad about me, they uh, because I couldn't spend much time with them. And always my husband take care of them. And so they are saying, "oh, you are as a father, though you are our mother, but you treated us as a father because you never spend much time for us."...Yes, sometime, I feel very bad. And, you know, sometime when I was uh watching uh TV and I was working something in my office work and my kids were uh um with me at that time, they, at that time, they used to say, "Um, mum, you can't uh look just entirely TV and you can't talk with us, you just uh can't leave your work in your office," they told me like that. And sometime I feel *very bad*, yeah, yeah, especially I didn't do lots of thing for them. Well, but my kids they told me, "okay, because we know you're, you go, and you, you're proud, and you wants to be very, um, you know," I, I mean, they can't understand me because I can't live without work.
>
> *Linda:* Yes, that's what I'm like [laugh]
>
> *Neelam Basnet:* Yes, yes, so, so
>
> *Linda:* I don't know if I'm, I don't know if I'll ever have, do as much as you but definitely I like working.
>
> *Neelam Basnet:* [Overlapping, Laugh] Oh, I think so, yeah. And sometime my kids they feel, my children they feel like that, and sometime they used to tell me, "oh you have work for there, because without work you can't live." *Yeah, they told me like that, especially my daughter*. And um well, she was in [private boarding] school and when she got uh graduation and I send her, India, in —, and I kept her there, and my son was in [private boarding] school, I want to be aloof...my kids always I kept in the boarding school, so I can go in the village and....At that time my husband he, he can't understand, *and he understand me*. Because he told me, "you like...your own identity."...He was a judge, my husband....Yeah and he never discourage me, "okay if you are pleased, okay you go ahead, I will manage my kids and home, you go." He has a good understanding so, I can do, um I could do....that much, otherwise it was not uh possible....yeah, not possible. (life-history interview, 19 February 1993)

Neelam Basnet's stories remind us there are at least two directions reconstruction can occur: While she took on a leading role in advocacy of female education in Nepal inside the recognized structures of authority, her husband took on the fair share of home and childcare, breaking the female monopoly.

Opposition from the village: 'A bunch of people joined hand against me'

An unmarried mountain village Gurung woman teacher in Nepal on her way to-and-fro to teach night classes to out-of-school girls in a neighboring village, had to pass through a kind of dark forest with only the light of a small traditional lamp, *tuki*, to keep her from straying off the path. Teaching women and girls outside of the times and spaces of formal school has been an experience of passage through the forest primeval for this unmarried Gurung mountain village teacher who realizes there are still fierce beasts stalking. This unmarried Gurung mountain village teacher has faced complaints from those she calls the "anti-group…envy group" in her village who told her own parents, "Boys are unemployed. Your girl employed." This "conservative movement," she says,

> was undercurrent societal sentiment.…Nothing in light.…I taught in night class (pause) to…newly married girls—15 to…22 years old—those girls used to come and I used to go there [to another village]. Teach there. So more girls used to come in schools. I usually went (pause) teach (pause) daily 3 hours and went back home with *tuki* [a traditional lamp in village]. (translation, life-history interview, 28 May 1993)

She had a public and private strategy to impose on the so-called enemy, the place and time and conditions for fighting. For success, the unmarried Gurung mountain village teacher asked one of the so-called enemy to accompany her on the journey:

> Uhn ask *Bhai* [anybody especially boy] to accompany me in my way back to home. That time (pause) some of the parties (group) frightened me (pause). Uhn not directly (pause) disturbed my activities. Not directly …indirectly.…some of the boys who didn't go [to school asked] "why are you going to be a teacher, I'm not going to be." [And when I] used to teach in the evening.…and…came back home…people…jealousy, never in front, but …to undermine the other girls.…
>
> If one does something…one gets success. It was my…then experience. (translation, life-history interview, 28 May 1993)

But the whole process would have to begin over again as this teacher noted, discerning the limits of personal potential, "Later on, I was frustrated. *A bunch of people joined hand against me*. It usually happens in village" (translation, life-history interview, 28 May 1993). I asked her, "What does this village think about you as a teacher?":

> Some people think it's okay. Somebody thinks "she could get no other job and became teacher." It's different from people to people. Some people feel…teaching profession is pure, no bribe, nothing. But some people think "it is worthless job. Those who do not get job outside came in village and become teacher, eat government money." People say so. But they are few. Not more. (translation, life-history interview, 28 May 1993)

For the 48/49-year-old married Gurung woman secondary (Science) teacher:

> More than other jobs, in teaching job, for women there is no such…difficulty. In other jobs, let us say nursing. They have night duty.

> Um, similarly um sometimes they are posted outside their home town/village. In those jobs, it is difficult—difficult to be separated from husband—from kids. But in teaching job there are a few problems like this. No problems I would say. We can take care of our child, can do domestic chores. And do [teaching] together....But in house, in doing [teaching] there are problems. For example every domestic work should be done [by women]. In addition go to [teaching]. So it is difficult. But in our family, when we have understanding. Husband helps that type of understanding. So I don't feel difficulty in doing [teaching]. However *I have to do women-specific jobs*. So a little bit difficult I would say, in doing service (teaching). (translation, three-teacher life-history interview, 16 May 1993)

One woman student teacher wrote, "My sisters could not go to school due to social prejudices that the girls are spoiled by education. They engaged them in household chores and said 'we could do without education, so can you.'" Elder sisters were most often constrained by household chores. Another wrote that her family's opinion "was very good. I feel lucky in that sense." Another noted that "the thinking of my family about school was not good. Because there is feeling that educated woman cannot get a job."

Moods and migrations

Mood is a story element set in motion by migrant daughters moving between house, hut, school, campus, goat or cattle shed, between rural and urban environments, related to the dry season and the wet season, night/day, being and becoming teachers. Discontent is one of the story elements which *Guru-heart* uses to measure her own and another teachers' movements:

> We were not happy with our progress. And that was the first time that I was so unhappy, in my whole life, I have never had an unhappy time....And uh not only that, *I was not in a mood to teach.* (life-history interview, 11 May 1993)

Her colleague, who has now moved on to a school in another part of Nepal, is not forgotten by *Guru-heart* who offers up the mute testimony about the one she says was

> a very rare teacher [who] was unhappy about this school, and she was my friend, and um the only thing that, the only thing that um made her uncomfortable, she wanted to join M.A., Master Degree, and she wanted to join [regional campus of Tribhuvan University] in the morning and every time when she started to do that, every time when she joined, this school stopped her in doing that. (life-history interview, 11 May 1993)

These two Gurung teachers, *Guru-heart* and her now exiled friend, both "rare" teachers, who worked in the girls' hostel as "housemothers," who did prep work, who ran clubs in an exemplary boarding school five days a week, were tripped up over something seemingly trivial, which led eventually to a confrontation and a migration on the part of her friend and to time spent in a dark place for *Guru-heart*. They tried to set up meetings with the people who are above them in the social hierarchy to try to resolve an issue of the senior girls' borrowing and not giving back the junior girls' dresses, but to no avail because these persons merely said that they

> don't have the time to do this [and when it] is the time for the promotions...they don't have that record....This um school has been running for twenty-six years. I don't think there is any record of any teacher running clubs five days a week. I don't think so. But *I* did that. And not only that, I was involved in many, many of these outside, [much louder] *I didn't do all these be—for, for getting this kind of promotion, I mean these things, I never did think of this. I did it willingly. But when the time came and* [tears welling in her eyes/sad tone to her voice] this um board where the teachers were evaluated, and....the principal...said..."feel free to say anything" which he would appreciate, and I wrote a long letter, mentioning it....he settled the case, and he should have called us individually, he should have done it differently, I think, he could have done that, but instead of doing that, he called everyone there, and uh he was furious you know, having red face, and trying to tell us, to have a tantrum. We were trying to explain....he was all the time pointing to us, [asking] why do we try to do this when we are assistants, and calling out our names, "—you must not do that," "the children," "[our names]."....Shouting and...you know, having red face. (life-history interview, 11 May 1993)

According to Gailey (1987b), "for classes and political institutions to emerge, people's identity and autonomy have to be constrained" (p. 261). In Nepal, as elsewhere, women have been the focus of civil and religious assaults and threats, particularly *Guru-heart* and *Guru-lekhika*, which have economic as well as political consequences:

> *Guru-heart:* After that I asked for a week's break to the supervisor....And uh she, she, you know [mentioned that] "[the principal] said...you don't have to hide or anything, [the principal] said *that,*" explained everything to her and she was aware of what had happened. And when I asked for a week break, without asking anything, she said, "No." She didn't even ask me why I wanted, anything, and uh I felt that she was aware of this maybe that is why she didn't [think] it is even necessary to ask why I wanted the break. And uh I was the person who had never had a single day's leave for five years. And uh she was unhappy to grant me this....

> *Linda*: Why did they get so mad about this, it seems like such a trivial thing, I'm sorry, but why did they get so mad at you two, because you called a meeting?
>
> *Guru-heart*: Yes. *I still don't know a thing about that.* What made them get angry....My thinking at present is that...continuously working for a long time in the same profession uh would, I think I have lost interest in doing that, you know [sharp outtake of grief/groan]? (life-history interview, 11 May 1993)

I am moved by deep feelings of love and longing to create meaning and to discover resonance in women's physical movements to and fro from the places we call home. I interrupted and asked *Guru-heart* about the ages and stages where the married Gurung teacher believes girls get lost, unintentionally adding dimensions of depth to the question. *Guru-heart* said, "Oh I see, yes, that's right. Yes, that's true. As to why they get lost *is* a difficult question, isn't it?" (life-history interview, 11 May 1993). I backtracked to the grief in her life that has turned to stone and I cried and she cried and we shared our sorrows, we named real moments when there is jealousy, when girls and women get lost on the path. I had an answer for the moment: If anger sparks anger, it is like making a fiery light. Not to burn down the wrong house, to make a bit of a light in the dark night, to do something so that people look up, say, "that's a sign" of vital energy you have to work very hard to find where and when it is the right time to discharge. So many lost people keep walking in circles. Lost in a harsh terrain, to conserve energy, stay in one spot, and build a kind of shelter for yourself, in metaphorical and literal terms, there is a greater chance that someone can find you. *Guru-heart* summed it up when she said, simply, "Yes," and then asked, "Does that happen in your country also?"

To marry or not to marry, that is another question

I asked the Magar teacher "why did you never get married? Was it a choice that you made?":

> Well, I didn't like to marry, I don't know why? You know, uh actually, when I was in school, you know, uh in our house we have got a very good atmosphere, you know....But when I went to the other houses and all, you know, I saw them, husband and wife, fighting, and once I saw, you know, uh, some of my relatives, after the delivery, you know, when the baby was born, she died, you know. Then there was some, some kind of thought, you know, my goodness, very bad to give birth to a child, its very difficult.

> I think that was in my mind....So I uh I didn't like to marry, I didn't know why, you know, and that too, you know, taking the responsibility of so many children, and cooking. Cooking is not my hobby. Doing this and that....and here [at the private boarding school started by her family in a shed which has now grown into a full compound] I have to do all the things, you know, I cook [laugh] and I clean my clothes and I wash. Sometimes I tell my brothers, "you know, I have to do all these things, you know, I avoided this work, and still....I have to do this work." But we have got a very good family. (life-history interview, 17 May 1993)

According to Liddle & Joshi (1986/1989),

> Many [Hindu] women make their resistance, not through self-sacrifice, not even through compromise (no matter how hard a bargain may be struck), but through explicit rejection of a marriage....A revolutionary step by women of the middle class, whose highest calling and social duty is marriage....who do not regard marriage as their only goal in life. This suggests that marriage is much less attractive to women who are able to earn a living independent of the family, and that marriage and a life of domesticity are not the fulfilment of every woman's desires. (p. 215)

Having a good and educated family means allowing a woman as teacher to have moments of intentional solitude. This Magar teacher makes the point that it has as much to do with family and her economic situation as it has to do with not being married and having the freedom to take time for "homing: returning to oneself" (Estés, 1992):

> I come by taxi, you know, 9:35 [a.m.], it takes only 5 minutes, like that. For twenty minutes I talk to the students and *I water, watch the flowers and all* and I said hello to all the students and then I go to the classroom, do my whole job, you know, teaching [laugh]....Uh, four o'clock school closed, you know, but it start *raining*, you know....at four o'clock it starts raining, then we stayed here for 15 minutes, 20 minutes, *then I went there, then I changed,* and after having my tea and all, again I just saw the books and all, what I was going to teach today, and there was in my mind that Linda is also coming today, I have to give her time [laugh]....I watched the TV, then I took my food around 8:30 or 9, and then after 10:30...I read...the newspapers and all and then I went to bed. Okay, that was my yesterday's routine. (life-history interview, 17 May 1993)

In the (almost too public space for an interview, for me, but it was her choice) school staff room, *Guru-aamaa* speaks out about this happening to her (and there are teachers, mostly men, coming and going, getting a cup of tea or stopping in to talk or to read the newspaper):

> My husband is not giving me any money....You can ask the principal or other people they know. Very big drinker. Not, he's very good ability, to work, but...our marriage was not a love marriage. It was by force....We married and then after two children were born....So *lots* of people [know

> about this problem], the school people that he knows also, all the children, all these village people. (life-history interview, 4 May 1993)

Guru-aamaa recognizes in some measure that "yeah, yes, for poor people, always government giving" (life-history interview, 4 May 1993), but the problem *is* for the "poor" and the "working poor," wife and mother, who wants to broaden the direction which this life may go. For getting married was seen by her sponsor-mother as an answer to the problem of her having been orphaned. But in her narrative that was when the problem began again. For no longer is she seen to be entitled to the kind of self-perceived or self-directed help or support that she feels she requires to fulfil her aims. After coming to the school where she is now employed, after her daughter was born, her struggles became more evident: "I gave my private SLC, otherwise I couldn't get any job. Those who don't have any SLC it is too difficult to get a job. *Every*, for *everything* we must show certificate" (life-history interview, 4 May 1993).

The 36-year-old Gurung teacher says she lost out three times on what she understood to be her only chances: Once because of missing out by a percentage point or two after having "studied very hard at that time" to "fight for the MBBS," further study for the chance at becoming a doctor (which at that time meant relocating to somewhere in India or to Moscow). Then because she did not have relatives in Kathmandu where she needed to go to complete her BSc, and she did not have any further advice, i.e., to do the year over and try for MBBS again. She gave up: "No hope for doctor." An unfulfilled dream is bittersweet restplace:

> I was unmarried....I was only about 18 or 19 years old so I thought that if I get teacher training then I can go overseas....So I can try my luck there. I can work there in the military. You know Gurkha military?...I can go there. In the civil service. In Nepal there is not...a lot of salary....It is very hard for us. Very hard life for us. If I go there I can...make my future....Some of our neighbors were from Hong Kong, they were teachers there...after three years they used to come for leave, I used to see them. I thought if I get chance I can also do that....I can also go overseas and see...the world. Like you! [Laugh]....I just wanted to work for four or five years....in that time I can see the world....Not all the world....Some countries ....like, my dream was to see Switzerland [laugh/sigh], Switzerland yeah? ...Switzerland....Yeah. And France....I can go there

> and visit like a tourist [laugh]. Then after that, I'll, I'll, I'll uh come back to Nepal. (life-history interview, 22 April 1993)

But her dream story's ending is still unresolved. She goes on to complete her two years (Diploma in Education) teacher's training at the regional campus and her first job leads her only to her present school. The teachers hired to work overseas in the military must be unmarried. And as this teacher says, "After married I got chance [laugh]. I got letter [which] said 'you can give interview' [laugh] like that" (life-history interview, 22 April 1993).

According to the 22-year-old unmarried Rai woman teacher in Nepal,

> Women are tied up at home. They don't get free time. And they're not, um, as educated as men, as highly educated as men.... I think it's bad.... Because women also need equal freedom, you know, I mean, in these fields, like, uh, they can also earn their own living but, uh, I think they don't like women being independent.... I haven't thought about that much. (life-history interview, 18 April 1993)

One Nepalese woman student teacher imagining herself as a mother advising her own daughter invokes dramatic mimesis and reverses the dominant story-line or pattern design: "If I had a daughter I would wish her to progress in study like me. Most of my experiences are related to household chores, I believe to be independent," a second did not want her daughter "under the control of somebody else as I am," and for a third her mood is made manifest in a wish about her daughter's migration: "I don't wish her to get married and go [to another's house] *arkhako ghar.*"

Revaluing politics as a threat to story, to moral dreaming

Although Nepalese women teachers seem to suggest in their narratives that real political interests interest them very little, as migrants through time, space, and family, they repeatedly demonstrate a sure grip on the latest issues to haunt the public imagination in Nepal and elsewhere and often at a very personal level. Like so many literary figures, these women speak to what is happening around them, and they leave me with questions, questions. I asked *Guru-heart* if "politics hasn't affected your life in any way?" She replied, "No [laugh/sigh] and I'm not interested in politics, you know?" (life-history interview, 11 May 1993). But I press on: "If women should be granted more independence and freedom....should they not also have...the responsibility to deal with politics? Because otherwise men will just do it, right?":

> *Guru-heart:* Yes, yes, that's right, [laugh] that's right....I was not interested but ...still I would like to know about politics. I was not interested...I think because I didn't have time to think about politics, I'm completely concentrated on my, you know, books Chem, my, my, because its not having time, I think, to do that. I know nothing about it. [Laugh.] You can know more when you are interested, that's what I feel [laugh].
>
> *Linda:* But what about the, the change that just happened recently in 1990, the change to democracy?....Has that affected you in any way or touched your life in any way?
>
> *Guru-heart:* Uh, no [laugh], no. (life-history interview, 11 May 1993)[4]

The married 36-year-old Gurung teacher's story encapsulated on the following page about a day in her life invokes the significance of the people around her, but in the life-history questionnaire excerpt it is not clear where she stands between home and school. Her footprints seem to fade between home and school, until she gets safely into her classroom—the very place where her voice takes on authority—her own story as a mother, as a daughter, as a teacher has been replaced by "politics" (see also Walkerdine & Lucey, 1989).

As "the Big Drama" of politics "plays itself out" (Ruddick, 1989/1990), women move from sites of dreaming to sites of waking, "being involved and being removed, questing and resting, creating and incubating, being of the world and returning to the soul-place" (Estés, 1992, pp. 256-7). Estés (1992) suggests, for some women, this "home is a forest, a desert, a sea....is holographic....is carried at full power in even a single tree" (p. 286). One Nepalese woman student teacher observed in her primary school, a hut made of tree branches, where one teacher worked with 5 students, most of the other children were engaged in household chores, planting paddy, wheat, and maize in the field, grazing the sheep and goats, bringing fodder for cows and buffalo, and looking after younger brothers and sisters.

Home

My routine is same [as yours, I think she meant because both of us laugh] as far as I know. I wake up at uh five o'clock. After that I cleaned my house, did washing cloths, cooked food [laugh], made uh breakfast for the family [of] five. And, um, we take [breakfast] between half past eight and nine....And...after that...my daughter....She goes to school at um half past eight....So I have to make, make all the things, I have to give her lunch, um, early in the morning she doesn't eat much. She eats only this much [showing a very small quantity with her hands] rice [laugh], food....For that we have to give tiffin [Food for tea, tea time] and she goes to, she leaves school at half past eight....And my husband, uh, always take her to the bus stop....At bus stop...bus from — school comes and my daughter goes by that bus. After that he, he comes back to the house then we have lunch and after having lunch I have to wash the dishes [laugh], clean the table [laugh], everything [laugh], and get ready [laugh]....And in that time my uh son, he goes to another school....so he leaves...house at half past nine. And my husband and me leaves house before ten. So I come to school....Uh...he goes to the office, after four [and here she is about to skip what she does at school, so I ask her specifically "just give me an idea of what you did yesterday, what your day was like at school?"] Well, now examination is going on and I, I'm in, you know, we have, our school have uh examination committee....and I'm one of the member in committee. So we have to arrange all the questions papers uh answers papers everything in proper place....We have to prepare all the things in time....Well I went to uh home....And then again household starts [laugh]. Um, in the morning time I wash the cloths, so after school I collected all the cloths and put them in proper place....and made um, what do you call it, made tea, my father-in-law, he lives with us, so I give him tea and some food to eat. Then I also prepare some food for my husband [laugh] my children, so they can come back to the home and they can eat....And I prepare all the things, ready for them [laugh]. And they came after five....Because my husband's office closes at five, so yesterday my son, uh he had holiday....in school, so he, he didn't, uh, stay in house, he went to my mother's house and he stayed there whole time. And my daughter's, her examination is also going on, so, um, she came back to my mother's house at twelve o'clock, I think. So both the children, lived there, stayed there, and after five o'clock my husband brought them [laugh] at home. And I gave them food [laugh]. And after that I again started my uh cooking for dinner. And at eight o'clock we had dinner....And after that we watched TV for a short time. So no special program was going on so we went to bed. Maybe at ten o'clock....I have to do a hard job....My house is very far from here. (married Gurung teacher, Kanya school, life-history interview, 22 April, 1993)

School

Linda (L): *Describe what kind of teacher you would like to be?*

Gurung teacher (GT): *A perfect teacher....*

L: If you had a choice of all the jobs in the world and could get the right training, what kind of work would you choose to do? Why?

GT: I would choose that kind of job, in which I could travel all over the world.

L: How do you think primary schools, high schools, and/or teacher training might be improved to meet the needs of girls and women?

GT: 1) We have to take more than 25 periods per week. Instead of increasing periods, it should be decreased.

2) No. of students [up to 70] in class should be decreased.

3) The training must be suitable for Nepal. In our training, we are taught as written in the foreign books.

L: What do you think the teaching role in the UPE in Nepal should be? Please give some examples of the work which you think teachers could do to help in the effort.

GT: 1) They should visit different schools of different parts of Nepal especially remote areas.

2) Teachers and students should not take part in politics.

L: What do you think are the things that will allow women teachers to be important education workers in the UPE in Nepal?

GT: Teachers should be invited in seminars.

L: What do you think are the things that will make it difficult for women teachers to be important education workers in the UPE in Nepal?

GT: Politics. (1993 questionnaire)

The married Gurung teacher said at the end of a day in her life, "my house," literally and perhaps imaginally, "is very far from here." Going to Nepal had immersed me in "what the ancients called the *vita activa*, a life of action," that is, "total involvement in concrete external challenges," and at the same time, "*vita contemplativa*...the path of reflection" (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990, p. 225; see Arendt's [1958] discussion of these Aristotelian terms). I caught a sense of this terrain between home and school one night in Canada, looking up, to pause in the act of writing, watching my son eat then play in a fast-food chain, near us a mother embroidering and, further ahead, a table of three generations and laughing German *Omas*. I felt at home; suddenly, I also felt others outside the frame of this small picture were rushing around (journal entry, 14 March 1995).

I asked the unmarried and dedicated mountain village Gurung teacher, who in the vernacular of describing outspoken women in Nepal has been referred to by a Brahmin male as "dashing," who has been teaching for 23 years, a most authentic and personal question, "Is it too hard to have children, husband, *and* be a teacher?" I will never forget the hologram in which this question was posed and I wonder if words can do justice to describe my feeling. I remember walking a narrow path to her home and the encroaching darkness of the green hill. I remember the poor state of a wooden building, a neighbor's home, with a huge satellite dish on top. I remember dreaming, or thinking, "was I dreaming this all up? Was I really 'here'?"

"This depth dimension of stories is crucial, for without it lives would seem empty, meaningless" (Christ, 1980, p. 2), and I saw and I experienced as a hologram how my whole life had led me to Nepal. I was a character, a celebrant, in a profound story, in life's flow. In Calgary, Alberta, as a peasant/artisan daughter, gaining a good education and a good footing across the Old and New Worlds of home and school meant playing with levels and dials in terrains. In Nepal, as a reveler in the carnival of persistence, it meant sensible, now sodden brown shoes. My mind refused to cooperate without competent teachers who welcome and support the creativity and the pragmatics of migrants, women, peasant/artisans, the working poor. In Nepal I found women who are and who are becoming teachers telling their stories about the coming of the daughter, which claimed my body, in terms of exhaustion and in terms of fellow feeling, *I had come far to ask these questions*.

Her story, the mountain village Gurung teacher's story, a daughter's story, was translated in many different ways. Theories about story and religion have helped further "to elucidate the depth dimension of stories," because

> stories are more than a simple recounting of experience....every story has a "sacred" dimension, "not so much because gods are commonly celebrated in them, but because [a woman's] sense of self and world is created through them....For these are stories that orient the life of a people through time, their life-time, their individual and corporate existence, and their sense of style, to the great powers that establish the reality of their world"...."Not to have any story to live out is to experience nothingness: the primal formlessness of human life below the threshold of narrative structuring." (Christ, 1980, pp. 2-3; Crites, 1971; Novak, 1971; see also Clandinin & Connelly, 1994, 1995)[5]

Back home in Canada, at the University of Alberta, the (male, Brahmin) Nepali translator (graduate student) interprets her answer this way: "That is individual thinking....If they are dedicated to teaching nothing debars them. And those disinterested in teaching but interested in salary might have difficulty in teaching." But in the field, the (female) Peace Corps volunteer married to a (tailor, low-caste) Nepalese man, and she is sitting close to the teacher and to me, looking deeply into the teacher's eyes and into mine (and I am missing *in my own heart* my one and a half-year-old son who would have appreciated all the sights and smells of animals, flowers, growing plants and who also would have been welcomed here), all of us sharing the "red" (without milk) tea made by the teacher's elderly mother in the clay compound (and thatched roof) of her birthplace, a village home (a half day walk from the road), almost flat up against a green hill (in Canada, we might say mountain), surrounded by chickens, kittens, pigeons, a baby goat, the *bisee* (water buffalo), sea of rice paddies, kitchen gardens, and the heavy monsoon clouds gathering over our heads, gives us another reading:

> She's saying, like I asked, "do you have friends, do you have female friends who are teachers and that are also married and have children?" And she was saying how difficult it is for them, and I think she said, "oh…if its in their *heart*, if they want to be teaching….then however hard it is it doesn't matter, they don't feel that hardness….because that's what they *want* to do." (North American female Peace Corps volunteer's translation, life-history interview, 16 May 1993)

"I did not like [to] marry," she says, for

> after marriage, more burden is natural. Husband says something. Children say something, more family obligation….I'm alone….I don't need to think of my husband, children. I'm not supposed to think on those issues. I only think of my mother, my mother's care. That's all. I can spare other time—in education—in school. (Brahmin translation, life-history interview, 28 May 1993)

It was clear to this in-service teacher that a turning-point for many "is known to all…a female teacher have a *dzal* (family + school responsibility)."

In Elshtain's (1993) bleak scenario inherent in "the growth of cynicism and the atrophy of civil society," there is an atrophy of the individual's ability to transmit, in play and in thoughtfulness, "democratic dispositions and dreams to succeeding generations through education" (p. 120). I join with feminist teachers everywhere in the following plea, wherever it is raised, which is simply that all these things are related. The essence to create can be a moral force for both children and adults in time and space (see Le Guin, 1979, on moral fantasy or dreaming, and Le Guin, 1989, on women, words, and places).

For this 43-year-old Chhetri primary teacher the construction of a vivid restplace in the story of a day in her life as a teacher, in which to recollect and to transmit for future generations democratic dispositions and dreams, in Nepal, is for women still quite difficult terrain:

> Now, women…they have to do the whole domestic chores. In doing outside service, they are doubly burdened. Household jobs and service. In school, in job. In the morning…5 or 6 o'clock, we get up. We have domestic chores. Up to [time of the moon]….In the middle, we come to school from 10 to [4] o'clock. So, for the women, a little bit stress. More burden than male teacher, for the ladies. Male does not do household job. But now male has helping attitude. Wife is in service, daughter-in-law is in service. So we should help them….Even though, we don't feel easy [because it's] difficult for women to be a teacher. (translation, life-history interview, 16 May 1993)

The unmarried Gurung mountain village teacher was very definite:

> No. Nothing has changed for me. I like democracy, because, people say "Oh! what's a woman! She does not like democracy"....But I feel, democracy is...best system. But we don't have that system. But, in panchayat system, there were good documented policies. Well written. Best rules and regulations. We should regard. In panchayat rule, it resembles to democratic rules. What did the panchayat? It covered its own career. They showed monopoly, autocratic rule and panchayat system ended. Now multiparty system came. Yes. There is democracy. For other nations of the world, Nepal is a democratic country. But here is no democracy, I feel so....
>
> In theory, the old system was fine, when you read the books about it, *oh it was great,* in the books, yeah....they say everything nice, good policy, its just like democracy, yeah its good for everybody, but in practice, they put, you know, they're, they're uh selfish for their own thing....they just said that word, *democracy,* for other countries....so that other countries go "*Ahh,* Nepal is democracy, now this is very nice!" Not so much for Nepal. (translation, life-history interview, 28 May 1993)[6]

This in-service woman teacher noted that "education is a life long process and also the dynamic side of the society." While another in-service teacher suggested, "the role of teacher will be important in the all-round development of the country." A third suggested that the "teacher should play the role of advocate in enrolling...more girls in school."

Arendt (1958)

> defines politics as the mode of interaction that allows individuals to get objective feedback about their strengths and weaknesses. In a political situation, where a person is given a chance to argue a point of view and to convince peers of its worth, the hidden capabilities of an individual are allowed to surface. But this kind of impartial feedback can only occur in a "public realm" where each person is willing to listen and evaluate others on their merit. (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990, p. 275n)

Neelam Basnet speaks from the heart that for a woman to become an advocate of female education is to participate in the society as a whole, sometimes at the expense of personal concerns. For the unmarried mountain village Gurung teacher after 23 years in this terrain this is her turning-point:

> What I got in my life? I did a lot, I shouldered troublesome responsibilities ....erected school building, collected students. Now everything is okay, school is okay....it's time for pension. Still, I have desire to study B.Ed. But the administrator says..."You can go in your own expense." (life-history interview, 28 May 1993)

'Born low' (Gross, 1993): A re-evaluation of female rebirth

In Nepal, in what I take to be also a kind of "thoroughly Mahayana country, the last limitation means that, in popular folk wisdom, a woman must wait until male rebirth before she can begin serious progress on the path of *dharma*" (Gross, 1993, pp. 81-2). In the three-teacher interview, the secondary (History) teacher, a married Brahmin woman who was orphaned by the death of her father at a young age, says she is holding onto a reality which is said within the larger public domain not be real or to be happening:

> Specially I have no repentance to be a woman. If I got rebirth, I feel proud to be a woman, because to be a boy is not everything....girl also, she might have these potentialities....girls....can perform male job....Boys and girls are different. But though physically girls may be weak, but mentally, on mental jobs, I don't believe that girls are mentally weak....Girls can do more than boys. So I don't have any regret being a woman and if I got rebirth I will feel proud to be a girl. [laughs at the end]. (translation, life-history interview, 16 May 1993)

One woman in the three-teacher interview I conducted, a 48/49-year-old married Gurung secondary (Science) teacher, says,

> I like to remain girl. In the next birth also, I want to be girl. Though I don't believe in next birth, if I am, I want to be girl. I like to be girl. I don't like to be boy....there may be number of reasons....in our society, boys get importance. But I don't think like that. We don't have this feeling in my family too....we treat boys and girls equally. In my *maiti* [maternal home], in my home [husband's home] also, my mother-in-law does not give importance to the son. So, we have also two daughters. We have not given importance to the son. Now, though son does more than girl....in the outside job, all jobs, boys know more, do more. Maybe it is because of our cultural values, maybe partly hereditary....In spite of these, I like daughter. I want to be daughter. I'm also daughter [laughs]. I want to be girl even in the next birth [laughs at the end]. (translation, life-history interview, 16 May 1993)

Another woman in the three-teacher interview, a 43-year-old Chettri primary teacher, who remarked that "I don't have qualifications. Just high school pass. SLC. But I um liked this teaching profession from the very beginning," said she also has

> No repentance to be a girl [laughs]. No repentance. In olden days, in our Nepal, I would say everywhere boys get priority. But it is changing gradually. And, one should have the same feeling between boys and girls....we have to change our mind. So for the daughter, as in olden days, as in traditional days, not treated like that. For example, in doing family planning, if one has two children....somewhere in villages, people aspire

> for boys, but educated have to understand it, and to be a teacher is not so harmful. (translation, life-history interview, 16 May 1993)

The taken-for-granted not seeing of the women and new vistas at every step

The awakening

The metaphors of teacher as mother and teacher as heart, teacher as builder of the nation and teacher as female author, or as the young Rai teacher illustrates about her own father's extraordinary teaching, teacher as peace-maker in Nepal, raised by Nepalese women teachers, tend toward (re)connecting women's spiritual and social quest. Christ (1980):

> Women's *spiritual quest* concerns a woman's awakening to the depths of her soul and her position in the universe....It involves asking basic questions: Who am I? Why am I here? What is my place in the universe?....The experience of nothingness often precedes awakening, similar to a conversion experience, in which the powers of being are revealed. A woman's awakening to great powers grounds her in a new sense of self and a new orientation to the world. (pp. 7-8, 13)

Through awakening women can overcome the *via* or *vita negativa*: "self-negation and self-hatred and refuse to be victims" (Christ, 1980, 1987).

'The notion of place, where people are able to be themselves'

I had asked in the questionnaires: How much education did you have before you came into teacher training? I was struck dumb by the breadth of this response from one woman student teacher: *"I had learned something from my educated family and neighbors."*

I was also intrigued by an in-service woman teacher's interest "in child psychology," because she had "been teaching for about 15 years, but...had not studied child psychology which I found very necessary for the teachers," in relation to a woman student teacher, whose "program of studies in teacher training" was "child psychology, lesson planning and teaching method," but who "did not like some part of child psychology. Because it was difficult to understand." I wondered what would happen if these two could speak to one another. I wondered about the child psychology that was being taught.

This in-service woman teacher responded that "there was variation in teaching programme among teachers," and while she "was in favour of practical education," she recognized that "others emphasized theoretical aspect." One women student teacher in Nepal responded that the training programme needed more of a focus on the practical dimension "and I disliked teaching without doing practical"; a woman student teacher

> liked the theoretical parts but the practical part was not satisfactory in the teacher training programme. Because there were not sufficient teaching materials. The physical facilities such as the building, the desks and benches were good. But there was no facility of drinking water.

This woman student teacher in her "teacher training program," liked the "teaching method," but disliked "campus environment." Another gave an overview of some of the specific elements:

> The duration of teachers' training programme was 45 days. We had to teach our subject. We had to prepare 30 lesson plans for one project. There was also supervision time to time. I felt lack of instruction for the teachers and they had to do on their own whatever they could.

One in-service woman teacher was concerned with the four months training she had received and felt it "was not enough," while another noted that her teaching became "more effective after my training. I am worried about my four month training when it will occur again."

A woman student teacher agreed "with the majority of activities like methods of teaching, use of materials, but I disagree with too many students and unavailability of textbooks."

This woman student teacher responded: "I believe we need to study those areas and we could know about it through the analysis of the geographical condition, environment, and tribes." Another woman student teacher suggested further that "the children were prohibited from their responsibility because the education was based on foreign curriculum which did not correspond," and adding in voices of other women student teachers, neither with their own nor "with the national situation." One woman student teacher believed "something should be done according to the needs of women/girls in primary, secondary, and teachers training programme." Another woman student teacher felt that "there are many...women who cannot buy educational materials," even with "scholarship. They have to work as domestic servants."

One woman student teacher brings sharply into focus the relationship between her primary school context, and where she feels a sense of belonging:

> *I belong to the hill region* and my parents were illiterate. I did not get time for my homeworks as I had to do many household chores. I used to be worried and used to do my homeworks late at night when I finished all my works.

This notion of place for another in her teacher training programme became evident when "women had to go to remote areas where there were no transportation facilities," and as well, "sometimes, they are given the subjects in which they have no interest." While for another woman student teacher "more provision of schooling" in one's own village, provision of "good instructors," would strengthen not only the village but her "educational foundation." Haughey (1993) believes "we need to give more consideration to," namely,

> the notion of place, where people are able to be themselves, as a positive force for learning rather than a deficit because they do not have access to the same resources—and we do not have the same direct access to them. (pp. 141-2)

Those first lessons and stories in primary school "and the corrections the teachers made who asked us whether we understood or not" are memories not forgotten by these student teachers: "I liked the teachers who took care of the students in their studies"; "I liked the teaching from my most favourite teacher in the school. I was very much enthusiastic to do something in my life after my primary school education." An in-service woman teacher responded that "the children get easily acquainted with the woman teacher. They get affection from the woman teacher and woman teacher also has a big role to play."

I, too, could feel the excitement again of those early days in school where for me, too, there was a woman teacher (I called her "Mrs. Hiccup" because I could not pronounce her name but she let me bring materials from home, e.g., Russian bread my aunt baked for us at Easter), and as one Nepalese student teacher put it, "there was nothing to dislike."

Poetry recitation and/or stories, "specially Nepali poems," one student teacher noted; another wrote "poems like 'pray to God,' 'poor bird,'" and so forth, were enjoyed. I liked to listen and to take part in stories, poems, songs, and dramas in my first school in Canada too. In Nepal, one student teacher remembered that "the teachers used to tell stories from the book or outside while teaching Nepali. I liked to listen and thought we gain more knowledge from stories." A woman student teacher did not like in her teacher training "putting emphasis on book only avoiding outside knowledge."

Perhaps for that reason, one student teacher wrote about her primary school, "I liked the poem "Farmer" because we all were from farmer's family," a second wrote, how she too was "from the farmer's family [but] had to drop" out from listening to that poem "to do household chores." And increasingly the ladder of the learning valued by these girls is another step removed, wrote one woman, "I used to remain absent most of the times because my parents were old and I had to work for our living. I belong to a very poor farmer family."

These women remembered the book that was crucial to their primary curriculum, *Mahendramala*, because it contained various stories, poems, and life histories, essays, and biographies. *Mahendramala* contained much that was noted by these women as useful, for example, use of clean and fresh foods, cleanliness, respect parents and elders, and to love the younger ones, "to live in harmony in community; the able person should help the others." One woman student teacher wrote how she liked the way "some of the topics also dealt with social prejudices." And what were these prejudices in girls' eyes and what did these young women becoming teachers in Nepal now think of them? One woman student teacher remembered

> I liked *Mahendramala*, which has the picture of both the boys and the girls going to school, which gives an expression to the women and the old people that they should send both the son and the daughter to the school.

One woman student teacher in Nepal emphasized, "When I studied Nepali [in primary school] I realized that it is necessary to have *the knowledge of listening, speaking and* *writing* which would help in everything later." Here I am reminded how in theory we need to express our doubts and "fears to an objective, compassionate listener. In practice, there are not enough listeners to go around, and few can be expected to be objective" (Semeniuk, 1995, p. 47), that is, to enable others to have a positive direction, a positive goal no matter what others think.

Learn to see what it is that connects us

According to Gross (1993), "feminism, like Buddhism and like all other visions of the human spirit, looks beyond the immediate and compelling entrapments of easy solutions and conventional perspectives to the radical freedom of transcending these entrapments" (p. 132). In other words, "you cannot predict, on the basis of gender, who is likely to be able to comprehend and practice 'the dharma which is neither male nor female'" (Gross, 1993, p. 177; Paul, 1979, p. 236). This woman student teacher wrote "I think it my *dharma* to serve the children and help my neighbours. When they get good education they can be good citizens." *Dharma*, the Nepali word for religion (the teachings), "which also means duty, ethics, morality, rule, merit and pious acts," has "a broader meaning than is usually applied in the West" (Bista, 1991, p. 29).

One motif,"the human fall from primordial innocence and bliss," which scapegoats "women for the limitations and finitude of life," is powerfully persistent across levels and terrains: It is the blame that takes one form in religious symbolism and mythology (Gross, 1993). Allione (1984) in *Women of Wisdom* suggests "it is the duty of women who are spiritually awake to make connections between their lives and the teachings" (p. 19; see also Gross, 1993, p. 276). To understand soul-place in stories, theories must begin to bear meaning across words/worlds and into the imprecise world(s) of the imaginal. Alcoff (1988) wrote similarly in a letter to the American feminist journal, *Signs*:

> The construction of *gender* should be thought of as a fluid, ongoing process. To think of one's gender as a stable property and an objectively determinable property is to be the victim of ideology. *Gender* should not be thought of as an object with clear boundaries and properties at all. (p. 399; emphasis added)

Certain paths lead to uncertainty and danger

In Nepalese society it is often said that certain paths taken lead to uncertainty and danger. Hridaya Bajracharya, a Newar Science teacher for 14 years in Nepal, an educator of Science teachers with a Master's degree in Physics from Tribhuvan University, a doctoral graduate of the University of Alberta who became a significant counterpart and study-partner of mine, said

> there are a lot of stories behind that feeling which are being told in society. I knew, when I was quite young, people who did not want to travel out of what was once Nepal/Kathmandu valley. Some of my relatives would not go out. Many people think outside of the valley everything is uncivilized, quite far away [laugh], you don't know, it is a path that leads to uncertainty and one that is full of danger. (personal communication, 31 March 1995)

Christ (1987) suggests "there are sacred spaces and female presences in every land." In that way, I am drawing on a conclusion reached by Westman (1991) that "feeling at home" is a significant identity project for each individual that "can be described as movement on several levels." One woman student teacher in Nepal noted in English that her grandmother "was illiterate.…conservative followed…traditional ideas.…'life is very danger to read it,' she said all day." A second wished UPE to "bring awareness about the importance of education to the illiterate parents; make the parents conscious to send their children to the school; provide adult literacy program to the illiterate elderly women." While this woman student teacher believed that "women should get chance to teach in their convenient place" since "they are not allowed to go out from the family."

Not only in Nepal is physical mobility not respectable for women, a problem which men also "have to face, but which they create, either by assaulting women or by discriminating against women on the grounds that other men might" (Liddle & Joshi, 1986/1989, p. 122). Mazumdar (1979) in *Symbols of Power* writes that "the most radical of the nineteenth century reformers [in India] had seen the subjugation of women as an instrument for perpetuating brahminical domination in society" (p. xvii). Many feminist scholars see their agenda as giving voice to the "unspoken worlds"; a survey of the most important Buddhist and Hindu biographical literature reveals that the voices and records of women are lost (Gross, 1983; Liddle & Joshi, 1986/1989). One woman student teacher in Nepal commented in English that her mother's mother in "old age, due to the government's policy" attended adult education classes. "She had to cook and also study new dramas and was exhausted. She got a heart attack." Another suggested,

> If my mother was literate she would have given us the chance to study at home instead of engaging us in household chores. But as she is now studying in adult education perhaps she realized it [as she now] says "go...study."

Shyness

In Canada, my primary school educated mother used to say to me, "if you go to university, you won't be able to talk to me." And I did not like it when she said that.[7] Sometimes I think she was right and sometimes I think she was wrong. I get all mixed up. My mother also told stories about the suffocating shelter of her own shyness.

Like this shy, beginning Newar teacher, I, too, once felt that "inside the school....its very safe." She faced difficulty, after her education in an all girls school, when she entered a campus of Tribhuvan University. For the first time she "come across, yeah, with the boys also....so, uh in the beginning I felt difficulty" (life-history interview, 19 May 1993).

I asked her what this difficulty was, whether it was like the teasing I had experienced in Nepal disseminating and gathering the questionnaires at a regional campus of Tribhuvan University, or whether it was like the boys who tease the girls that classes "should be for them not the girls...since they would stay...with their parents and be useful while the girls would marry and go away," or whether it was sometimes just a watchful presence, sometimes "shouting out the wrong word when a girl was called upon to read from the blackboard," or just saying that they might perhaps even want an educated wife one day (Junge & Shrestha, 1984, p. 848):

> *Beginning teacher:* Yeah, yeah, like that.
>
> *Linda:* But it makes it, it makes it hard to go if you are a woman, doesn't it? It makes it hard to go to school....Well, yeah, like for instance, when I walked across a university campus in Nepal

> *Beginning teacher:* Yeah
>
> *Linda:* I found it very difficult
>
> *Beginning teacher:* Oh yes
>
> *Linda:* Because the boys
>
> *Beginning teacher:* In colleges mostly....If the girl is alone it is very difficult to enter...the school....Very difficult. (life-history interview, 19 May 1993)

She said, "if I had a daughter (but I am not married yet) I would...let her to choose her own way," with the corollary that she would want her to avoid what she does not want to pass on from her own experiences: "Shyness." What did she like best about primary schooling: "Making toys with the mud (chinese). Playing dramas, sports"; and about secondary school: "Math and Science"; what did she like least: "Encounters with aggressive friends" (life-history survey, 1993). Her parents did not have different ideas for boys than for girls: "But...they don't allow us to [stray] away from home, late at night. They don't feel good for the girls." Still I discover that her aim "to do research works" reaches back and forth between childhood and the future in terms of the female house of being, between several areas:

> It is a creative job from which one can create a new thing for the nation and also for the world....I would like to open my own Nursery garden, produce new developed varieties of plants and distribute to the farmers. But, for this I should first get some trainings, which is not available in our country. [If] women teachers are given proper training and sent to the different parts of the country where they should be provided with safety environment then, this would make women teachers to be important education worker[s]....
>
> 1) One thing is that if she is married, then it would be difficult for her to get permission from her family to go away from home to work.
>
> 2) Another thing is that women teachers [the word *need* is crossed out and replaced by the following] *deserve* safety environment if she wants to work in rural areas of the country. So, I think these two things are the main difficulties for women teachers to be important education workers in the UPE in Nepal. (life-history survey, 1993)

According to Asthana (1974, pp. 57-8), on Hindu women in India,

> the attempt on the part of some women to cast off their shy temperament and adopt certain useful professions like nursing, teaching and other public services, ushered in an era of socio-economic freedom for the womenfolk.

A 'need to collect the views of women teachers'

The strength of the market metaphor and the present dominance of market thinking in education and development theory and practice does not need to be re-emphasized here; suffice it to say that to bring women into the market (as teachers primarily serving the state) means to bring them into the mainstream, which is not seeing so many subtle and complex things. The way that women take vital readings of their current conditions may be dependent upon a small choice, dependent upon small differences, if the girl was strong in study she might have continued in school, if she was quarrelsome she might have gotten education somehow.

If we take a look at Buddhist "women's moving stories," there are many women teachers, elders, *gurus*, "who left the world, meditated, taught, and brought others into the path" (Gross, 1993). For instance, "collected as the *Therigatha*, the Songs of the Women Elders," this "accurate and usable past for women" is ignored in

> later Buddhist traditions...in favor of stories about male heroes....Women are characters used allegorically and fictively to prove doctrinal and ideological points, rather than flesh-and-blood women....
>
> The lack of significant mythic and symbolic feminine figures is a major psychological and spiritual handicap for women. Though the presence of a divine feminine may not secure political and economic freedom and equality for women, at least women's bodies and modes of being are mirrored and validated by powerful and generally venerated goddesses in religions like Hinduism. (Gross, 1993, pp. 9, 18, 51, 54, 57, 138)

At one time, in Nepal, a woman might have enjoyed staying at home and had pride in saying my education I will sacrifice. At one time that sacrifice of her own further study might have given a woman happiness:

> The situation has changed....She has to make her own world. How to make that is difficult for her. The new world may require further education, require the educated language we speak. If a woman has lost that opportunity, she may feel quite frustrated. (personal communication, Hridaya Bajracharya, 31 March, 1995, poised upon his return home to the elder sister who had sacrificed her own education)

One woman student teacher responded as well how when "I studied education [it] made me decide to be a teacher." The Magar teacher later realized in practice that this "is the best job for girls," otherwise, "the whole time you have to be at home" (life-history interview, 17 May 1993). The retired and still teaching Magar teacher explained: As a Nepalese woman

> you have to be at home…doing this or that. But we don't feel, and actually, I don't feel inferior, you know, I being a girl. Here, you know, in Nepal, they have got this notion, you know…even our [male] teachers in [all girls'] Kanya school….They think [they are] superior. I said, "why superior? We are better educated than you." Then what is there? Nay, nay, nay, you, uh in our house you say, even to their wives, you know, they will think, you know, that [wives] are inferior, and we [husbands] are superior, that notion they have got. But now girls have come up and I'm happy. (life-history interview, 17 May 1993)

A woman student teacher wrote about the need to activize teachers: there should be "time to time training in new methods of teaching." This woman teacher wrote about the need to activize this thought in society which doesn't "believe in women; they think that she is a woman and cannot do anything." For this woman student teacher "as there are few educated women it is difficult to work." An in-service woman teacher suggests there is a need to

> organize workshops, seminar(s) according to need; nation level conference; paper presentation on related subjects from the experts; regular publications of newspapers and magazines about UPE; organization of district level conference for sharing experience.

For another there is a "need to collect the views of women teachers."

'When every aspiration is frustrated, a person still must seek a meaningful goal'

According to Csikszentmihalyi (1990), "when every aspiration is frustrated, a person still must seek a meaningful goal around which to organize the self" (p. 92). When the perspective is switched and a woman teacher becomes the centre of the story we are left with mystery, and a feeling. One student teacher said primary school made it more difficult for her and given this understanding she had changed: "There are many reasons which I cannot describe. Even though I had good economic condition I had to face problems to look after my parents as they were alone." Another wrote:

> Many people got chance of education after opening of schools but due to the superstitions about women's education many people did not like to send their daughters to the school. This kind of feeling had affected me even though I was very much interested to study.

Perhaps this is what led one woman student teacher to mention teaching students "according to their feelings," which for one respondent meant "equal participation of students while teaching; good relationship of student and teachers; teacher must be friendly." For these student teachers the importance of the teacher being a role model is perhaps where "the teacher can play an important role" in accepting students, and where all students feel welcomed and where girls and boys are supported in their learning.

For the 36-year-old married Gurung secondary (Science) teacher, girls' parents are pushing them to go to school, "They *do*, all the parents do!":

> But these girls.... They cannot think very hard what they are doing. Are they doing wrong thing or right thing. Still when I teach them extra time in class, especially after seeing results from exam, when they got poor marks in subject, "you are getting these poor marks because you do these things. You are wasting your time. Why don't you stop wasting your time so you can do good work like other friends. Other friends have got good marks. Why don't you bring good work home?" I used to push them.... I still am now.... Yeah, at that time, I thought that in this life it will be much better if I become a teacher at school. And I can push them. When you stay at home doing nothing, just being a mother, being a wife, being a housewife, you cannot tell everyone's daughter you should not do this, you should do this. You cannot say that.... They will become, they will fight with me. [Laugh].... At school they cannot. I will advise them like a friend. Like their mother. Don't think me as a teacher. Just think me as your sister, or your mother, that I'm advising *you*. (life-history interview, 22 April 1993)

Every story relies upon prevailing social codes

Every story relies upon prevailing social codes, for instance,

> social norms already entrenched in pre-Buddhist culture in India and in East Asia, included a clearly defined "woman's place." That "place" was one of formal subordination to males, whether father, husband, or son. Furthermore, that "place" was understood to involve family life, marriage and reproduction, first and foremost. (Gross, 1993, p. 214)

Even "though it is compelling and accurate to speak of Buddhism *as* feminism, that statement is not the complete story" (Gross, 1993, p. 132), as a Hindu woman and a teacher and a long-term advocate of female education in Nepal, Neelam Basnet, speaks in a very loud voice, even in private: She said she changed herself in so many ways: "When I will learn something...I will do *something*. I must do something for our women" (life-history interview, 19 February 1993)

Symbols of cultural power

Guru-aamaa credits the willingness of "time" spent as a measure of "worth" and of the teacher: "If we cannot give money, we can, what can we give them? Time to teach," which she repays:

> If sometimes I have chance, I'm living in a village…many village people coming to me and they are asking, but always I am encourage them, encouraging to *study, study*. I had helper. These days I don't have any helper, but…many helpers…some came and [have now] gone, others still come and go.…all of them got a chance to study with me. Now they can read, they can write, uh the brilliant one, one boy stayed with me for two years, would look after my children, a boy, and he came to me for two years for holiday. Because he also one kind of orphan is, mother, has a mother, married another husband, and uh so no love and care.…So he is working at *chowkidar* work…security guard.…he came to me and was telling me now he is studying in Class 6. During the night time he is sitting for guard work and daytime he is going to school. He learned with me to read and write English, Nepali, both, and Math, I taught, and he is also grateful. (life-history interview, 4 May 1993)

I wonder what else was this orphan learning from *Guru-aamaa*? Just as this student needs the support of *Guru-aamaa* in his adult learning, teachers "need training…always" (*Guru-aamaa*, life-history interview, 4 May 1993). It is an ongoing, never-ending process, some of what *Guru-aamaa* recognizes to occur in her present school on an informal basis by more experienced teachers training the less experienced teachers. She wants to study more but as teacher, as mother, she recognizes that while she is working hard, that while she takes on much extra work she cannot get to the level of accreditation or recognition on the path to be the teacher she seeks as an orphan to be: While another "is teaching theory," and here she alludes to the young female expatriate teacher in her school, "I am teaching practical" (life-history interview, 4 May 1993). According to MOEC/UNESCO (1990), in Nepal, Western education "has failed to strike roots in the social ecology in which it functions" (see also Mazrui, 1992, on "economic woman in Africa").

Going to the 'root of things'

Stories about how women once controlled the instruments or the symbols of cultural power but were defeated by men, abound. In a dark forest, Ram abandons his love interest Sita to enter the land of the dead and to return to the land of the living, like the story of

Orpheus, like the myths which have their locus in male initiation rites, these are versions of the universal journey of the shaman or the guru—who learns in a dark cave, a dark forest, or in various forms of exile, the wisdom that the tribe will need for the future. For instance, in the *Mahabharata* Epic, the ideal of the devoted wife is Gandhari, who "blindfolded herself for life when she discovered at her wedding that her husband was blind" (Liddle & Joshi, 1986/1989); in another version, five princes, sons of the aged and blind father, disguised themselves as Brahmans, and stayed with Gandhari the restored wife in the forest, while the ideal type of manly heroism, Arjuna, was directed by Indra to go on pilgrimage to the Himalayas and seek as consort, the wild, fierce deity of an aboriginal folk (Frazer, 1898/1970).

On this path, all the Nepalese women who are and who are becoming teachers, but especially, two Hindu women teachers, *Guru-lekhika* and *Guru-heart*, taught me to go to the "'root of things,' a very Buddhist approach to major existential questions," and stories of women and feminism also ask us and taught me to question conventional gender arrangements and stereotypes in a similarly radical way, while "Buddhism, strangely, has never applied its usual radicalism to the gender stereotypes and arrangements that it accepted and utilized" (Gross, 1993, p. 128; Steinem, 1994). Bista (1991) proposes that in the Licchavi Period (5th Century A.D. to mid 9th Century) "most of the institutions of higher education were Buddhist and, perhaps, the Nepali institutions were Buddhist as well" (p. 116). King (1987) points out

> that early Buddhist writings contain no reference to unmarried girls being sent to school or being educated at home, and yet mention is made of the presence of educated women. This is a paradox difficult to explain; but it does say something about the relatively low status of women for, even when they did acquire knowledge and learning, men did not consider it worth recording how this came about. (p. 40)

With the advent of the Sankaracharya in the 11th century, "Buddhist institutions were attacked and the products of their work destroyed, with widespread bookburnings"; and thus, Bista (1991) concludes there may be some connection between the beginning of

Nepalese literary history in the 14th century and the adoption of the Hindu system of education:

> The model was that of the *gurukal,* with prime emphasis on the *guru* (teacher) *shishya* (pupil) relationship. Often, as was the case in Nepal, the role of guru was assumed by the father, thereby compounding the special qualities of the father-son relationship. (p. 117)

While Hindu scriptures mention several women seers, poets, and seekers of enlightenment and that "women of the three higher castes had access to studying Vedic knowledge under a teacher and in some cases women could also act as teachers themselves," and women could attain a very high position in society, this relatively high position "deteriorated over the centuries":

> In the course of time the teaching of girls by "outsiders came to be deprecated, not to speak of residential teaching....Thus, the first step of bringing girls away from the healthy external influences of great and good teachers and confining them within their parents houses was taken. And, still later, this process of confinement was completed when physical confinement came to be accompanied by mental confinement—when, in other words, the education of girls practically ceased." (Chaudhuri, in King, 1987, pp. 37-38; see also MOEC/UNESCO, 1990, p. 26, on Nepal)

Pearson (1990), on the female intelligentsia in turn of the century Bombay, suggests

> in response to social and economic pressures which required the rationalization of society in accordance with the development of a dependent capitalist social order....education was seen by the social reformers as the means to equip some women as intermediaries between the new ideals of the male world and the separate female world. The first women groomed for this role received their instruction within the household. (pp. 136, 138)

Guru-lekhika's mother was groomed in a similar fashion in Nepal. *Guru-lekhika* had a "vague remembrance of some kinds of tutor coming to my home to teach me when I was a very small child," in Nepal, "but it was only for a short period of time" (life-history survey, 1993). In India, "with the expansion of girls' education in the latter part of the nineteenth century teaching had become a professional occupation for women" (Pearson, 1990, p. 139), according to *Guru-lekhika,*

> And so my mother...thought that it would be good to send us, especially *me* and my *brother* and one *sister*. And she started sending us to school...at that time the servant used to carry us up to school, you know [laugh]?...They used to carry us up to school. And then the school also it was not so good school, it was a government uh school....and the teachers also were not so qualified, you know? At that time...I think now, I can realize that they were not even matriculate teachers....But they were *good* in

> teaching....Yes, they were good in teaching, in those days...they worked hard I think, you know? And uh I studied there, but uh later on my father he couldn't afford for our study, so I had to drop my studies....in the middle....
>
> At that time I was only 13 years....Yes, then....in India. I worked in a place and they used to publish paper from there....And I worked as a compositor there....about one and a half year....I was really a good compositor in that time. And uh I just wanted to *study*....you know. Again I uh started going for...private tuition....then uh I appeared in the SLC exam then as a private candidate....and I pass SLC. And before...passing the SLC also, I had worked about six months in a school....
>
> Actually...I was compelled to work because I had to, uh, uh, look after my family....you know, my mother, and my brother and sister, because my father he was always outside and with other women....You know, and he spend money on, uh, drinks and gambling and the woman, you know? So, I had to face all the troubles [begins crying and her crying continues unabatedly even as she tries not to let it stop her from talking and, once, to smile through her tears], you know?...Yeah, I was very young, and my mother also, she was very gentle woman. (life-history interview, 29 April 1993)

Guru-lekhika's story is suggestive of what she liked to study, "Nepali literature and English language": her mother in the prevailing codes and social norms entrenched in pre- and in Hindu culture personifies "the Mother Goddess representative of the potential for reproduction" and secondly "the image of the devoted wife whose fidelity and submissiveness to her husband and purity [is] Sita; and third, there is the uncontrolled" image of the "goddess without mercy" (Gray, 1990, pp. 229-30). *Guru-lekhika's* "mood" is one of distrust in male power in this teacher and distrust of the female power of Sita in women as salvific:

> And I passed SLC and at that time I used to go to that teacher's house, *early* in the morning, then that teacher you cannot imagine, that teacher and his wife they used to sleep in one bed and inside one quilt, you know. So when I used to go, to enter inside, the woman just uh from, uh, just, uh, uh, from her quilt she used to order me that "you wash the pots, last night's pots, and wipe the floor, sweep the floor....and wipe it, and make tea for us, and then you can study," she used to tell me. And the teacher, he was very good, kind-hearted, but he couldn't say anything in front of his wife. Then, uh, I used to wash the pots, and clean the house, everything dirty, and make tea, and later on I used to offer them. And the teacher used to teach me because I don't have, I didn't have to pay money for that, you know? But she used to take work from me, that woman. (life-history interview, 29 April 1993)

To Helen Keller, the definition(s) of "the 'real world,'" I take to encompass those who "take work from me" in *Guru-lekhika's* terms, are not

> as the Bismarckians would always have it, a world of power-relations, but rather a world of vulnerable people, all of whom have the same basic needs and almost all whom would, in normal circumstances, wish other people's basic needs to be answered as well as their own. (Oldfield, 1989, p. 236).

The "bare facts" of Nepalese history could not begin to give us an understanding of the rise and fall of the Rana ruling elite *and* the course of history that teaches hard lessons such as that hard work is the ground on which mothers and daughters create the moral force of fantasy or fiction out of their own experience, which *Guru-lekhika*'s life history offers to do. In Nepal, as elsewhere, the history books do not tell this oral history, and "across time, as the old wild initiation rites fell away, the instruction of the younger women by the older women" has increasingly been "hidden away" (Estés, 1992).

The Nepalese women who are and who are becoming teachers spoke and wrote about what had influenced their going to school, for further education, and their decisions to become teachers; the idea of independence, the ability to earn a living, to stand on their own feet, is a recurrent theme. Each life has its place. As Gadamer suggested, "We are always in the middle of story." I wonder now whose story? Is it to be our own story, a wish, a mother's or father's story, or a wish about their own daughter, a grandparent's story, a story about gods and goddesses, about terrains, about agricultural cycles, about waxing and waning of the moon, the rains which come and go, birth and rebirth?

Liddle and Joshi (1986/1989) point out the Brahminical ideal, the most famous example of which is Sita of the *Ramayana* but the stereotype is also evident in Gandhari in the *Mahabharata*: a Brahmin "woman's first duty was to worship her husband as a god, no matter how cruel, unfaithful or immoral he might be" (p. 64). In the story of *Ram-Sita*, Sita was "abducted by a demon king but, even though she has resisted seduction, has to prove her innocence through ordeal by fire after her rescue and subsequent rejection by her husband Rama" (Liddle & Joshi, 1986/1989, p. 64).

In a later version of the *Ramayana*, written by Sister Nivedita (Margaret Noble), "in a very subtle way, resistance can be contained in the sacrifice.... where Sita invokes the Earth

Goddess to take her into the earth if she is innocent" (Liddle & Joshi, 1986/1989, p. 204; Nivedita, 1907); and in the *Adhyatma Ramayana*, "immediately the earth opened and…Prithivi, the earth mother…stretched out her hand to her much enduring child, claiming her as the fairy queens claimed King Arthur after his defeat" (Gowen, 1931/1968). According to Christ (1987), "almost the only story of mother and daughters that has been transmitted in Western culture is the myth of Demeter," the Grain Mother, "and Persephone," Queen of the Underworld, a story told of the agricultural cycle, of the death and rebirth of the seed crops, and whose rites were later to symbolize the death and rebirth of the soul, which later informed the Eleusinian mysteries[8]:

> In this story, the daughter, Persephone, is raped away from her mother, Demeter, by the God of the underworld. Unwilling to accept this state of affairs, Demeter rages and withholds fertility from the earth until her daughter is returned to her. What is important for women in this story is that a mother fights for her daughter and for her relation to her daughter. (pp. 130, 199)

The "mood" created by such "an old/ story—the oldest we have on our planet—/ the story of replacement" (Olds, 1984) and the poem written by the unnamed Kathmandu mother which opens this chapter

> is one of celebration of the mother-daughter bond, and the "motivation" is for mothers and daughters to affirm the heritage passed on from mother to daughter….to be rid of the "powerful, pervasive, and long-lasting moods and motivations" of devaluation of female power, denigration of the female body, distrust of female will, and denial of the women's bonds and heritage that have been engendered by patriarchal religion. (Christ, 1987, p. 131; see also Geertz's [1973] "Religion as a cultural system," in *The interpretation of cultures*, p. 90; Spretnak, 1978/1984, pp. 105-18).

As Neelam Basnet said (very emphatically), "*Because women are the partner and, women, if women are not educated the nation will not be developed. That is my feeling*" (life-history interview, 19 February, 1993). The strength to be garnered from this feeling, a feeling gained at the age of 10/12 when her mother died, and reasserted after she passed SLC, when her father sent her to university to gain an Intermediate diploma in Science education (ISc):

> Quietly I just join. I didn't inform [family members who sent me] to study in Science education they have uh the aim to make me a doctor, a medical

> doctor....But I change my aim...idea....At that time I thought, "oh it will be better um better position to serve...the village people, uh, being a rural development officer." So I joined that training and then after that I informed [family members] and sometime they were not happy....But anyway I told them I will work [amongst] the rural people. (life-history interview, 19 February 1993)

'Homing': The terrain is an endeavor

This feeling of "homing....to return, to go to the place *we remember*....in some way it is an internal place" (Estés, 1992; emphasis added). Neelam Basnet suggests it sustained her adult advocacy years, for as she said,

> I didn't do for our livelihood. I didn't work for our management, for our children, well, of course, little bit, maybe...But my husband he can manage, he has a good income...but...I thought, I, I will not be a, simply a housewife, I have to do some things. (life-history interview, 19 February 1993)

For some, the terrain is an endeavor:

> Women begin to sing again after years of finding reason not to. They commit themselves to learn something they've been heartfelt about for a long time. They seek out the lost people and things in their lives. They take back their voices and write. They rest. They make some corner of the world their own. They execute immense or intense decisions. They do something that leaves footprints. (Estés, 1992, p. 286)

Neelam Basnet's feeling that the traditional path for women and girls was changing in Nepal required an answer she proposed to give with her life so that other women as teachers might follow in her footprints.

The work begun by the foremothers, feminists, and women in resistance "requires such a strong commitment that not every woman will be able to sustain her level of involvement. Rather, women will come and go and come again—burning out and recovering" (Alonso, 1993, p. 274). But perhaps "if women had the power, 'we would sit at the negotiating table and we would search—for as long as it takes—for a peaceful solution'" and more than ever when "one woman's definition...did not necessarily match with another's" (Papandreou, in Alonso, 1993, p. 272; see also p. 227). Just as *Guru-lekhika* has expressed in a short story that while the dominant story in Nepal is how the cultural and structural system (and in her story she uses caste as symbol) has been replaced in theory, and in law, in practices she has observed which continue to this day she believes otherwise. Just as "both Buddhism and feminism begin with experience, stress experiential understanding enormously, and move from experience to theory, which becomes the expression of experience," *Guru-heart*, the mountain village Gurung teacher, Neelam Basnet, and *Guru-lekhika* similarly share "the will and the courage to go against the grain at any cost, and to hold to insights of truth, no matter how bizarre they seem from a conventional point of view" (Gross, 1993, pp. 130-1). All these perspectives use "willingness to hold to experience over convention and theory and…tenacious courage to explore" (Gross, 1993, p. 131). For all that tomorrow might bring and to finally "hear the foremothers cheering," we need "incredibly dramatic and optimistic" illustrations "of the courage and self-assuredness of the upcoming generations" (Alonso, 1993, p. 274), in other words, we need stories to live by.

Guru-heart's act of self-suffering

A good example of doing whatever it takes to ensure that everyone in Nepal has access to education is the act of self-suffering that *Guru-heart* undertook: that is, she acted the part of the Nepalese students she observes who struggle to gain education without adequate food and resources. When she was studying to be a teacher she made herself very sick and weak because of her commitment and desire to put her body where her belief and commitment lie (with the dispossessed peoples of Nepal who cannot get enough to eat, and who study under conditions that she, too, wanted to comprehend).

Guru-heart placed herself in danger of illness and death; thus, she deserves to be heard to speak loudly, if only in response to this woman student teacher who suggested "it is difficult to work in a non-matriarchal traditional society and women are by nature weak":

> I feel the time of my tertiary education the most important part of my life line the part which I hardly will ever forget because this was the time I first experienced what it is like living a hard life to get education as the average Nepali students do to get further education after doing their S.L.C. I realized that education was not that easy to acquire as we usually thought for people facing financial difficulties and those who hardly get help and sound suggestions in study from others who are educated because most of them come from the family of uneducated members. In my case also I

> didn't get help (apart from financial help) and essential suggestions from my parents because of the same reason i.e., for being (un)educated. Consequently I had to struggle extremely hard to get graduated in Science. I didn't know how important the basic knowledge of Optional Maths is in Science and no one suggested me of its importance. If my parents were educated, they would no doubt have helped to guide me in my choice of subject and I would not have to struggle that hard.
>
> At first my worry was how to get merit but later I found very difficult even to get 40% (pass mark) mark. Then my worry was how to get 40% mark that I had to quit [thinking] of getting merit. Somehow to get through the exam was my main focus then. So I was entirely involved in study from early morning till late in the evening that I had no time to think of anything else (food, rest, health) except study. During 45 minutes break in the campus instead of heading towards the cafe for tea some of my friends and I used to rush to the library because books were so expensive to buy. We used to spend the 45 minutes break writing notes in the library because that was the only time we could do so. So most of the day I used to go without tea and snack, didn't have proper meal in the mornings and evenings to save time for study and the result was there of my action.
>
> One day at noon when there was bright sun, while coming from campus I went dizzy at the campus gate and fainted there. Fortunately my friends were there with me to carry me to my quarter. Later I came to know that this happened due to weakness. (life-history questionnaire, 1993)

Guru-heart's ability to face the weakness in her life is an indication of strength, not weakness. She sensed connections between her own weakness and the exploitation of others:

> This incident has become an unforgettable memory of my life. It also has become a tool to use as an example to give to students of struggle for an education from which students can learn a lesson that if one has a firm determination in life to do something there is nothing that can stop him [or her] from doing so. I have considered this time of adverse condition the most important part of my life because this part of my life has led me
> (a) To become a successful teacher to serve in the field of education.
> (b) To stand on my feet to become independent. I am no more a burden to my parents.
> (c) To be able to support my family.
> (d) To be a positive influence to others, particularly to girls and women.
> (e) To be able to share the responsibility to fulfil the need of Science teachers in the country. (life-history questionnaire, 1993)

'Purpose gives direction to one's efforts…it does not…make life easier'

A woman student teacher wrote that she wanted to become a "teacher to show the students right path to serve the country." For another, "it was my own decision because service to mankind is good," and for this woman student teacher, we "also make good citizen by being a good teacher," which for a fourth was because "teaching profession is against selfishness." Such "purpose gives direction to one's efforts…it does not necessarily make life easier" (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990, p. 223). Through trial and error, through intense cultivation, women and men straighten out the skein of conflicting goals, choose the one that will bring purpose to action, "establish turning-points and thresholds," and "'sew' different time sequences together with concrete places on earth.…this huge fabric of edges and turning-points" (Westman, 1991, p. 19). This woman student teacher compares the information she receives and transmits with concrete experience, in other words, she plans to teach others to sew together what makes sense in her and in their contextual "here":

> I like to be a good citizen.…If I got a teaching job I believe I could do it very well and in the satisfaction of the students providing them practical knowledge as well as the knowledge of day to day situation.

For *Guru-aamaa*,

> because I was so much interested when I was a little girl, because I saw…when I was in [orphan school], I saw [orphans as] teachers…doing their work…I saw….I was so excited. Oh, I want to be a teacher now.…[But while her sponsor-mother, the doctor who started this hospital was nursing a broken leg and an arm in Britain, the people at the hospital she started] stopped me, they said, "No, you must stay in the hospital to work." I said, "No, I must go." There was a *fight* in my life. (life-history interview, 4 May 1993)

From pillar to pillar, cornerstone to cornerstone, 'they are coming forward'

In Nepal, the women teachers I spoke with helped to build schools and the conception of "home" into schools by their presence to open and activate space(s) wherein girls would be able to participate.

Finding her way to help the family and "a way to help the society....I wanted to do something for the unfortunate," a young Rai woman wants to be remembered as a "dedicated teacher" (life-history interview, 18 April 1993).

One student teacher suggested "a teacher produces the future pillars," which for another and for *Guru-aamaa*, and the Magar teacher, too, translated into "I have an intense desire to educate the small children." This woman student teacher responded: "I had decided to become a teacher when I was still young. When my students become great person tomorrow I would be pleased."

What Nepalese women who are and who are becoming teachers also remind us is that one of the most critical cornerstones in developing a body of study about women as teachers "is that women themselves observe and describe what takes place in their own lives" (Estés, 1992). What Neelam Basnet has "experienced and understood" she answers with her life (Bakhtin, in Casey, 1993):

> My mother, uh when I was uh 10/12 years, she expired....And then, at that time, that was my, my feeling when I will learn something and I will do *something*. I must do something for our women....I thought, I, I will not be a, simply a housewife, I have to do some things....
>
> Every time, uh when I will go to visit uh in the rural area and I collect the people and I ask them to open a school and to send daughters. And I was the example, you see? And it was very easy to convince them, I got SLC pass and now I got a job, very respectable job, a school inspector....My position was at that time school inspector. And I got position, this is, I can work. So if you got, if you educate your daughters they will, they can do, like me! They can work as a teacher, they can work as a school inspector. And they never *believe* me. Oh, *you* are the inspector. They thought always the police inspector. [LZS laughs.[9]] And even the small girl, I was just 18/19-years-old at that time, and they *never* believe me and they thinks, sometime people, "one female, one lady, one girl, has come to inspect our school and she is asking to send our daughters to school. Let's see how she is."
>
> That way they will come and when they will come and I um talk very well and I'm from the [quiet tone] very well-to-do family but I want to do something for the, especially for girls and women, so please you send your daughters and please if you don't have school nearby your home, nearby your village, you please, all people do just um something, and I will give something, um, from the government side, from *money*, and please you just open the school. And I spend two/three days with them and then I sleep with them, I eat with them and then they slowly and slowly, they, they believe me.

> And they told me oh without opening a school, without sending our girls, you will not go back in your town. They told me like that. And so the people were so convinced and slowly and slowly educated. And the time was also, you know, influencing, influencing them, because the, all over the world, the change has been coming and so....Ahh, well, I don't know [if I am going to write the story of my life for the women of Nepal] [laugh]. I have [written] one book [*Some Insights into Female Education in Nepal*] especially, in English. (life-history interview, 19 February, 1993; Basnet, 1991)

And as if to answer back this woman student teacher responded:

> The teacher should play a good role in the UPE because the future of the students depends on the teacher. Some students are serious to study and others are not. Some cannot go to school due to their poor economic condition and others due to social prejudices. The teacher can play an important role in these matters. *The teacher can convince the people and can help to abolish such prejudices.*

And up and up this ladder of learning, each person having a different ladder of meaning, this Nepalese woman student teacher responded, "my family" came along. They "had the opinion," she wrote, "that a school is a temple of education. It produces the future pillars and we have to support the school, and to help to create a good environment." There is no resting place on this continuum even if the school is a good environment, and for more than one student teacher, but especially in this young woman's words: "The school was good. The villagers had made the school building by their own contribution think that the school would help to educate their sons and daughters."

For the 43-year-old Brahmin secondary (History) teacher:

> For lady teacher, there are many difficulties. Because, in our Nepal, women are responsible for domestic chores. So, when women goes for service they have double roles to perform. Domestic chores, child care, and full time duty in the teaching job. So women have some difficulties to do other jobs. *However, gradually there are some changes among us. No change [for] a time. And gradually, everything is changing.* For the job holder women, husband helps, mother-in-law helps and other family member helps. This system is growing up. (translation, three teacher life-history interview, 16 May 1993)

While one woman student teacher noted "education has brought change among the illiterate village women," this woman student teacher wrote, "I like to convince the parents to send their daughters to school; there should be special consideration in every occupation; the number of women employees should be increased in each institution and organization."

A third wrote that she would "raise awareness about women's education; arrange adult literacy classes for adult women so that they could provide education for their children;" and pay attention to the "use of relevant curriculum and proper evaluation," which for a fourth meant that the "curriculum should be appropriate to the children and country," and for this woman student teacher, "it is necessary to make educational development looking at the present condition. We have to find out the necessity of education in each part of the country and establish schools in those places." One woman student teacher even wrote that "there should be an institution which takes care of the education and different training programme for women." For this in-service woman teacher the "curriculum should focus [on] life-related subjects for women." For this student teacher women "should be emancipated from social bondage. There should be a competition between women only," which for another meant, "activities to encourage women in education should be made."

This woman student teacher wrote that "the students should be more activized. The physical facilities should be improved. The teachers can help on this ground. They can activize the students as well as the guardians." This in-service woman teacher wrote that "by becoming a teacher I want to remove the feeling of the parents who discriminate [between] boys and girls."

The 41-year-old unmarried mountain (Gurung) village teacher who teaches Social Studies and English to Classes 4 to 8, who has been teaching for 23 years in the village where she was born feels that becoming a teacher in her village has served an important service for the girls:

> Han [a nasal Ha]! I don't know about other village. But for this village, when I became a teacher in school [pause], villagers said the daughter of *phalana* [a Nepalese way of saying a name which serves as pronoun to her father's name] became school teacher. "Women can get opportunity to be teacher, so let us educate girls." I feel, [villagers] have attitudinal change towards girls' education....after, people, when I became teacher, [see] a daughter became a teacher. (translation, life-history interview, 28 May 1993)

And thus, it emerged for me that in acts of conversing in relationship with the women teachers I encountered in Nepal, and in return to home, that if women "are teachers...they are builders of the nation" (Magar teacher, life-history interview, 17 May 1993). One woman student teacher dramatically reversed this line suggesting that "to meet the needs of…girls and women—nation should be developed; everyone should have rights; girls and women also should get chance for education."

What Nepalese women who are and who are becoming teachers told me was with the ease and discursiveness of good conversation, and, more important, with a uniquely open-hearted grace, so that I, as one of their readers felt part of a privileged friendship. I feel re-energized by my contact with these women for what seemed to have served our mutual transformation was in the sharing of the significance and complexity of our stories as women teachers for the girls who are coming up behind. *Guru-builders of the nation* illuminates in yet another metaphor, a shared sentiment, by emphasizing, "you know, Linda, actually now they are, they are coming forward, you know, girls are coming" (Magar teacher, life-history interview, 17 May 1993). One student teacher noted: "education has brought change among the illiterate village women."

As a kind of answer to Neelam Basnet's life-long persistence to get one female teacher in every primary school, one woman student teacher in Nepal wrote that she now believes "*there should be at least two women teachers in a school.*" A second suggested "the number of women employees should be increased in each institution and organization," and a third woman student teacher wrote that "there should be provision of free education to encourage…girls for education," reiterating what a number of others had written, adding, "it should be mentioned in the constitution."

The need for 'competent' teachers

I was intrigued to find the word "competent" come up over and over in women teacher's descriptions of the kinds of teachers who influenced them or in the kind of teacher they desired to be across this terrain. Then I read how,

> The majority of the Kathmandu people [who] are collectively called the Jyapu. Jyapu literally means "competent worker" in the Newari language.…who remained united and who never allowed themselves to be pushed into the position of serfdom or slavery as many non-Hindu indigenes…were forced to do. (Bista, 1991, pp. 40, 42, 55)

This woman student teacher wrote:

> There were no competent teachers when I was studying in primary school. I had a thought that I should be a trained and competent teacher and should work hard for that at that time.

One in-service woman teacher defined what she meant by

> A competent teacher—to provide education; to disseminate education; to make people aware of education; to clarify the importance of education; to enhance the activities of UPE.

For this woman student teacher where "teachers were competent," the "classes were regular." For another, her high school "was of high[er] standard" compared to her primary school because "the teachers…were competent."

For this in-service woman teacher the "discipline and teaching standard in the secondary school" compared to primary education," revealed to her that "teachers were competent in their subjects." For another, she desired "to be a competent teacher," because "I was impressed by the teachers who taught very well." This woman student teacher defined *education* as "good and useful" when "the teachers were competent." This in-service woman teacher defined *competent teachers* as

> qualified; considerate; unbiased; away from politics and buttering; should have the knowledge of human problems, character and environment; able to establish relationships between the students of different institutions and countries.[10]

These two women student teachers have a specific desire for competence:

> •I want to get good training to be a competent teacher
>
> •I want to be a competent teacher and create [a] healthy atmosphere in the university.

Ten women student teachers responded that the kind of teacher they want to be is encapsulated in the word "competent." This woman student teacher noted: "I want to be an example of a competent and tolerant teacher. It is my own decision." A second wrote, "I want to be a competent teacher. It was the influence of my own bitter experience and the school environment"; a third noted she wanted to be a "good, competent, kind, active teacher." For this woman student teacher:

> I want to be a competent teacher in my subject area. There was a Science teacher in the primary school who used to teach effectively. The Math and Social teacher were not good. They used to scold and beat the students, and the students did not like them. I did not want to be like those but as the Science teacher.

One woman student teacher "had a desire to be a competent and tolerant teacher to show that very lady teacher who scolded me once. But it was not the influence of her," which to this in-service woman teacher meant that "teachers [have] an important role for the UPE" in Nepal: "Teachers should be able to arouse students' interest in study and convince them about the utility of education." For this woman student teacher, "I would choose to become a competent teacher. Because I aim to serve the country." Another mentioned "a teacher must feel responsibility in teaching the students. There should be competent teachers." This in-service woman teacher defines *competence*:

> To encourage the small school age childhood for schooling, to teach by play, dance and music, make them able to ask teachers about the things that is not understood, to understand student's problem, etc. The teachers were competent.

Choosing to follow different routes and models of development

Nepalese women (who are and who are becoming) teachers and women as teachers outside of Nepal are choosing to follow different routes and models of development. Even so, there are some unifying figures and symbols expressed in their stories that cut across differences. In Nepal, the "pulp fiction" level of popular culture reveals more acceptance of the variation that awaits one on the road to being and becoming a teacher, i.e, in this Nepalese woman student teacher's words: "I want to be a good teacher. I have been influenced by the people who always suggested me to be good who themselves were *good and educated*."

Future and practising Nepalese women teachers' stories of experience reveal the path taken, the helping hand, the walking without stumbling, the taken for granted not seeing of the women, and the new vistas at every step. As participants in the ongoing story of development and education, we need to listen in order to bridge the levels of meaning between this variation and the more powerful story that says there must always be only one uniform route. Women's stories in Nepal have raised in me too a long-lasting mood of affirmation, awe, and respect for the literal/metaphorical territory between barren fields and orchard garden that is like a wish in a dark forest. One woman student teacher in Nepal wrote about her beliefs and she invokes the power of these beliefs in a wish. She also seems to be suggesting that a "well-thought-out sensate approach to life…responsive to a great variety of concrete human experiences," back and forth across both the private/public worlds, "would be preferable to an unreflective idealism" (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990, p. 221):

> Childhood is the most important part of life. It is like an orange tree which we fence and put manure for good fruit; in the same manner if a child is given proper care she could do well in…life. So it is also said, "a child is the asset of tomorrow." *I wish to pass S.L.C. in first division and get a good job and stand on my own feet.* These are important parts of my life.

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[1] See Shaha (1992).

[2] See also Junge and Shrestha (1984).

[3] Phenix (1975, p. 332) writes that thought grows out of wonder, awe, and reverence, a reformulation of Dewey's concept "of the unsolved problem as the stimulous for thought," and represents "a sounder, more positive, and more distinctly human formulation" of the politics and possibilities of given localities.

[4] See Rosha Chitrakar (1991) for further discussion of how the male dominated hierarchies of the major political parties in Nepal have not proved very progressive in terms of having women elected to Parliament.

[5] Christ (1980) writes how she "changed the pronoun in Crites's statement"; he "uses the masculine 'generic' pronoun because the sense of self and world in most stories is created from a male perspective" (p. 135n).

[6] This is a blending of two translations (one by a male Nepali Brahmin colleague who distinguished himself by sometimes writing and/or telling me that "this is not true," as did another Brahmin female, or "that is not true" and then in brackets telling me what was true and, by an American Peace Corps worker and her low-caste Nepali husband who accompanied me on a walk to meet this village teacher living and working in the mountains). The "sarcasm," the political mockery, in her telling did not translate recursively to all of these translators, and I wonder if her words would have been spoken in just the same

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way if those who said this is true/not true had been there. It reminded me of Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, where this line occurs after a speech full of praise: "Et tu, Brute?" (Act III, Scene 1, Line 77).

[7] I have been told by D. Jean Clandinin (personal communication, 1995) that this, in some ways, is a story of her story.

[8] I am surprised to find myself writing and reading about the Eleusinian mysteries in terms of having come full circle. I wrote and read a dramatic monologue (Schulz, 1989) in which my grandmother's carving knife story emerged for the first time and at the same time the term *Elysian fields* emerged.

[9] I realize later in re-reading this transcript why I laughed so loud. I was remembering how my father had picked me up when I was a toddler, because I would not eat my supper, and he took me over to the telephone, pretending to dial the number of the police station, and to tell the police that I would not eat my supper.

[10] The majority of the people in the Valley are said to consist of "peasants, farmers, vegetable growers, florists, potters, bricklayers and many other professions...collectively called the Jyapu," but, who like the hill people, also, "had a long history, were proud of their culture, had a strong internal organization developed from ancient days, and were in control of the important means of production, namely the agricultural land" (Bista, 1991, p. 42). Jyapu are known as "among the most progressive farmers in Nepal. They are also the main group of people who take care of the communal festivals, religious dances, musical performances and important seasonal ceremonies in the Kathmandu Valley....acting in roles which are usually filled only by high caste people. For example, Jyapus not only carry the statues of the deities and the ritual offerings but also cook food for them and for the high caste people of both Hindu and Buddhist backgrounds" (Bista, 1991, p. 42).

Chapter 5

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE JOURNEY

"Interrogating Language: The Writing Act"
so i guess where i've come to with words
& the writing act,
is to think of it not so much as the construction of meaning,
which we can then impose
on the rest of the world,
the way we're taught to do in school,
for the most part,
but rather,
as a way of listening,
to what's there,
inside us,
outside us,
to help us reconnect with the deepest part
of ourselves,
& beings around us
as an act of survival & transformation
in a world that's currently in jeopardy.
—di brandt, ***Prairie Fire*** *(1992)*

Role-model: *A person who serves as an example of the values, attitudes, and behaviors associated with a role. For example, a father is a role model for his sons. Role models can also be persons who distinguish themselves in such a way that others admire and want to emulate them. For example, a woman who becomes successful as a brain surgeon or as an airline pilot can be described as a role model for other women.*

—E. D. Hirsch,
Dictionary of Cultural Literacy
(1988, p. 408)

Merging professional and personal knowledge landscapes

My listening to Nepalese women who are and who are becoming teachers, and my spiralling journey through contexts where males outnumber and outrank females in educational hierarchies and in the dominant discursive texts, confirms the stories told by such lives lived in such places reveals more about what it means to be a woman and a teacher. My listening also reveals more about what it means to develop an audience to this developing literature. Practising and future Nepalese women teachers helped me to think through my own story of being and becoming a teacher. Listening to their play of words, across epic terrain(s), helped me to reconnect the radiant point of their stories to the story about how a change of perspective changes possibilities in diverse ways. It helped me to articulate and connect the aim of my work in research, writing, and in teacher education, which is to create an environment for exploring possibilities, for welcoming diversity, different paths and perspectives.

This required a willingness to listen "deeply," and as a consequence, I have been changed. I feel very differently about myself, not only in terms of my professional context, but in terms of my personal, aesthetic, and community contexts. I continue to explore, interpret, and synthesize in a variety of settings, wherever fieldwork may occur and in which teachers gather together to share and birth their stories, in relationships to people and places "grounded in ethical considerations" (Lyons, 1995), what Noddings (1986) calls, "considerations of caring." I continue to compose a life as a woman and a teacher within a community of listeners who listen "deeply" to other points of view, who entertain new possibilities in the ways an increasing number of authors, e.g., Clandinin et al. (1993c), Clandinin and Connelly (1995), and Lyons (1995, p. 81) re-imagine "teacher education must be situated in some middle ground in which the conversation of education can take place."

This work is about woman as teacher, imagined and being re-imagined, who can and should play a role in the conversations that take place. In the past decade, interest in teachers' stories has increased (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). These stories could be called compositions in performance (Lord, 1960), and these compositions, which occur in oral literature, and also as a component in written literature, are not always simple or direct, in as much as they serve as "composite products of the whole society" (Andersen, 1928). Subramani (1985) suggests that "the urge to write and the creation of a literature are intricately linked to the problem of readership and consumption." I found many times that this developing literature requires "reading aloud" in order to realise its full meaning and art. Hence, the question arises of whether what reads well in one environment can be translated into forms and environments that sustain isolation and hierarchical relationships.

What Nepalese women and I developed is a record of a particular journey together. My aim is to continue that journey to explore teachers' stories, to re-construct, to generate—through reciprocal action—new roles and the possibility of new ways of learning. To "learn how to let experience shape and reshape theory…to *understand* rather than to find methods of justification, verification, and control" (Code, 1989, p. 169), to articulate those understandings to build curriculum out of a community of learners/listeners, is an ever-deepening spiral, an ongoing collaborative process of merging personal/professional knowledge landscapes.

Migration and metaphor as a pathway to understanding

Let the reverie continue! I take you now on a significant journey like the one I have taken across seas, across places and paths, which leads to uncertainty and growth and goes on and on, in terms of extending the understanding of stories first told to me by my displaced family. It is a contradiction in terms: Put down this book and close your eyes. Learn to see and to listen to what lies between and beyond the straight lines of the written page: Teachers, as imaginative entities, borne across epic terrain(s), are migrant peoples. The unique and individual expressions of future and practising teachers who describe themselves and the terrains upon which they are situated suggest a sort of migration, of ideas into images, of images into ideas.[1] Horowitz suggested about teacher education research that it is often said "we do not tell the whole story" (Schulz, 1995). A pathway "for making explicit the tacit understandings that enable us to make our way," without prescriptions or "fully orchestrated scores" (Oldfather & West, 1994), is a middle ground, grounded in particular terrains, experiences, and histories (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995).

In *The Marks of Birth* (1994) and in an earlier collection of autobiographical essays, *Exiled Memories* (1990), a Cuban-American writer, Pablo Medina, suggests the need for migrants to bear witness and describes the compulsion I share to write about our own valuable perspective(s). Rushdie—"that creatively controversial British-Indian migrant writer" as Nandan (1991) calls him, who has for the past five years and presently lives in deepest exile under a form of "cultural terrorism" the *fatwa* (the fundamental Islamic religious decree ordering his death)—offers "us one of the richest metaphors for our age." The very word *metaphor*, with its roots in Greek words for *bearing across* invites migration (Rushdie, 1987):

> Other writers have sought metaphors to depict qualitative research.... Valerie Janesick (1994) presented qualitative research as *dance*, and Ray Rist called hurried research *Blitzkrieg ethnography* (1980). Gail Weinstein-Shr (1990) described qualitative research as *journey*. (Oldfather & West, 1994, p. 23)[2]

"We all cross frontiers...we are all migrant peoples" (Rushdie, 1987): A journey "from experience to mediation, representation, and symbolism" allows "us to understand experience in new and deeper ways" (Oldfather & West, 1994). How "individual highlighted experiences fit together in a coherent way...*creates similarities of a new kind*" (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980), but also creates differences of a new kind. What is "bedrock" (Eisner, 1993) is found at the level of *feeling*, like metaphor derives its power in part from aesthetic resonance with sensory experience. For me, lament and laughter sustain a cosmology and a way of thinking that

> literacy in itself does not radically change....and conventions like repetition and certain myths and symbols do show themselves in written verse....a fundamental difference remains...the oral poet composes in direct relation to...community while [her] contemporary...may work in isolation, and, for the moment, without a responding audience. (Subramani, 1985, pp. 47-8)

Oldfather and West (1994) suggest "when two realms of experience are compared through metaphor, unique understandings become possible" (p. 23). Have someone read the following out loud: You might see and hear a young Nepalese woman singing in the distance, her "melancholy voice" drifting "over the thatched roofs that smoulder with smoke from the evening's cooking fires, and out in the vast darkening sea [demon's blood and/or black water in Hindu creation stories] of rice paddies" (Cameron & Giri, 1985, p. 20). What does that mean in terms of her oral traditions, in terms of those who are largely divorced from theirs? Within the realm of her/our experience, the "qualitative world is immediate before it is mediated, presentational before it is representational, sensuous before it is symbolic": *Guru-lekhika* suggests similarly in a recent letter "that experience to a significant degree depends upon our ability to get in touch with the qualitative world we inhabit" (Eisner, 1993, p. 5):

> At the moment, I'm busy writing. The weather here in Nepal is getting hotter and hotter day by day though there is rain in-between.

> It was a wonderful experience sharing my views and interacting with you. I will always cherish those beautiful memories. (personal correspondence, 26 May 1995)

When I came to Nepal, I was oriented to such perspective, when meeting new friends or partners, to "reenact the ritual of telling stories" (Christ, 1980). I learned as Nepalese women told their stories more about how to be a co-participant "in the generation of meaning, to understand the reflective quality of our colleagues' talk and the social conditions that shaped its content" (McPhie, 1995, p. 195; see also, Clandinin et al., 1993c; Clandinin & Connelly, 1995; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Lyons, 1995; Tabachnick & Zeichner, 1991). When I returned to Canada, I learned more each time I read aloud this developing body of work about woman as teacher. Each time I was inspired further to "expand our sense of the deep structures and improvisatory possibilities in qualitative research" (Oldfather & West, 1994).[3] What Eisner (1991) calls "the enlightened eye"—and what I call the "enlightened ear"—in "arts-based research" are qualities that allow researchers and performance artists "to fly free in response to serendipitous events and emerging understandings" (Oldfather & West, 1994, p. 23; see also Bateson, 1989, pp. 2-3). I can only imagine what might have occurred if there was built into this research more time and space, a slower, more reflective s/pace, and more financial and moral support for all participants in Nepal. I work toward this aim for (and with) Nepalese women, through continuing correspondence, through searching out collaborative possibilities, to meet the needs of all participants in the education of future and practising teachers, where teachers can come together and read aloud their writing, and where I might continue to read my writing for ongoing and critical reflection.

I must say at the outset that I did not go to Nepal looking to define "the indescribable subtleties of a primary female" educative relationship, the one that for daughters begins with their mothers, "fraught" as it is "with cultural and emotional overtones" (Jussim, 1989). I had no metaphor of what was being evaded in the curriculum[4] as a guide, but I had my own story of who I am and how I was making sense of my life and my practices, more akin to a short story, revealing only a tiny facet of one author's view of life. It took time and genuine curiosity to find an interpretive community. As I progressed, I shared stories of how I was making sense of this research, and "theory in the shape of research papers, philosophical books, other teachers' and students' stories were all used to help" (Clandinin et al., 1993b, p. 210). This was part of my growing historical female awareness and in conception, is novelistic, for every story has a much larger canvas (e.g., see Silverman, 1977, on "mothers and daughters on the Alberta frontier").

To arrive at the understandings of future and practising Nepalese women teachers required me to take on different roles and responsibilities in ways not normally possible or rarely told. According to Christ (1980),

> Stories of mothers and daughters, of women's friendship, of women working with women, of women's love for each other are rarely told. "Chloe liked Olivia," a simple statement about a woman's feeling for another woman, is, Virginia Woolf wrote in *A Room of One's Own*, a sentence that has rarely appeared in literature. Readers have known Chloe only in relation to Roger and Percival. They have never heard how Chloe felt about her mother, whether she liked her sister, what she thought about when she was alone, whether she ever contemplated her position in the universe. When women tell their stories, Woolf suggested, "Chloe liked Olivia" will become commonplace. Readers will know how Chloe felt when she got up in the morning, what she did when Roger and Percival were not around, how she felt about the world. (p. 4; Woolf, 1957, p. 86)

As a mother and a teacher-researcher in Nepal (for while I only sometimes brought along my breastfeeding one-year-old son, I always brought with me that direct experience), I approached these women with my tape recorder and my desire to engage in conversation.[5] Perhaps this lent me a certain cachet for I did not find in Nepal that "conversations were not easy; female teachers tended to respond only when spoken to" (Joshi & Anderson, 1994). Thus, I would like to amend this understanding: Female teachers tended to respond only when listened to in a caring and moral environment. But I do not wish to shed such a harsh light on Joshi and Anderson's (1994) findings; I just want to point out as they say that "these limited observations did unfortunately tend to confirm the textbook analysis": There is an evasion of women's and girls' direct experience as curriculum, a displacement by promotion of a cultural myth that reads "male dominance is alive and well."

The Nepalese women I encountered believe that listening is powerful in their world; they also confirm that a play of words or a story addressing the question of *why*, for instance, why a woman "is sitting backside," or "hiding in the house," or being and becoming a teacher is an interpretation she, ultimately, has to make on her own. That each of us has "territory" to defend is "an attitude empowering the 'other,' and is one which needs to guide our actions" (McPhie, 1995). There is a collaborative side to written and oral literature, which begins with the creation of a work and is completed with its reception by an audience, by its reception in society. McPhie (1995) points out "the difficulties...cannot be underestimated....The required time and skills are not always possible for any of us" (p. 195). As Nepalese women and I have come together as women and as teachers to point toward a new awareness, we

> have come full circle, honouring again, as in pre-literate societies, the oral tradition, the rights of the speaker, and the particulars of an event [which] is not a static or tradition-bound view. It is a view which recognizes the unique experience and perspective of each participant merits attention. And it is a view which cautions that potential gains in education will go unrealized unless we are prepared to entertain, as learners, within community, multiple perspectives and possibilities. (McPhie, 1995, pp. 195-6)

These multiple perspectives and possibilities I have been expanding upon as levels throughout what is more than just a doctoral research project[6] as it applies to women (being and becoming) teachers in Nepal as elsewhere:

> 1) One level is the physical movement to and from the place where one lives. This movement has a constant turning-point....Movement to and from the dwelling-place can follow a seasonal cycle, a daily rhythm and even shorter spans of time [Middleton's (1993) "walk from kitchen to classroom"].

> 2) A second level is that of transitional rites and particularly the use of thresholds and turning-points in initiation rites, to mark symbolically, life and death.
>
> 3) A third level is movement between different ecological niches. (Westman, 1991, p. 19)

If women's physical movements and relationships in the hierarchy of the human family as migrations and metaphors can be raised as an issue, universalization of primary education in Nepal is important and possible. The threat to that collective story is inherent in their own story of being and becoming teachers where there are "many socio-cultural, socio-traditional and [existing] economic constraints." One in-service teacher's story is this: "It is difficult to work in the school away from home," which for another was because "there is family problem, lack of experience and training, economic problem, and problem of transportation." To the growing list of hazards or obstacles on the journey or quest across levels and terrains, i.e., "family bondage and prejudices; economic, social, and religious constraints," noted by one woman student teacher, a second made this adjustment, "women [also] have different constraints in social, economic, religious, [and in] behavioural and natural conditions," a third wrote,

> though women are most suited as primary teachers because they know how to teach children affectionately....can give the love to the children who have just left their mothers' laps....it is very difficult to act as the mother to all the children.

This basic belief that affects Hindu ethics and conduct, in terms of the heavenly bird, *Garuda*, at whose appearance only heroes are extricated, *Garuda Purana* reveals: "Whether confined in a mountain fastness or lulling on the bosom of a sea, whether secure in...mother's lap or held high above her head, a man cannot fly." Historically, this marks a point:

> from around the altars of the Vedic Aryans older deities pass away and are forgotten; for them hymns are no more fashioned. Newer deities inspire the poets' praise as fulfilling new functions in the course of the people's changing life....Mother Earth herself early vanish[es] from the scene. (Frazer, 1898/1970, p. 50; *Garuda Purana*, 1911/1974)

The irresolute compromise for daughters, whether to be given more education (especially at the post-secondary level) or just adequate education (post-primary level) and then get them married, is a threshold to be crossed, a turning-point, a short story in some fashion in Nepal, for women were ascribed roles and metaphoric power(s) "in the home and the neighbourhood community" (Joshi & Anderson, 1994). "The prescribed social role of mother or daughter," in the stories of some frontier Alberta women, "undermined the possibility for independence or created a relationship that was merely a lifeless form" (Silverman, 1977, p. 35).

'A place for character building': A story/play with levels and dials

I travelled to Nepal into women teachers' story/play with levels and dials like a sight and sound-arts engineer, I recorded and mixed "the voices of participants for presentation to a future audience—the research community" (Oldfather & West, 1994, p. 23; see Krieger, 1983). In Canada I played with levels and dials around numerous "kitchen tables," i.e., in university (Centre for Research for Teacher Education and Development), in my home, and in the homes of Nepalese colleagues, examining, analyzing, reading aloud, and searching for ways and means "to provide balance while maintaining the clarity of the voices," and, "adding a collaborative voice" (Oldfather & West, 1994, p. 23). Improvisatory compositions and their performers "undergo their 'naked' creative struggles in front of an audience," whereas epic composers and "classical compositions are often perceived as untouchable" (Oldfather & West, 1994, p. 24). There is potential value in multiple approaches, "each of which may be admired for contrasting qualities" (Oldfather & West, 1994; Preissle, 1991). As a performance artist, I thrive on "newness, innovation, and further exploration of the idiom" (Gioia, 1988).

Those persons who are accustomed to the improvisatory nature of "composition in performance" (Lord, 1960) "encourage each other to do things differently, to express their individuality and particular talents" (Oldfather & West, 1994). I also would agree

> that the live performance is always best: hearing the freshness of the sounds, seeing the facial expressions and body language of the performers… experiencing the ambience of the room, being immersed in the culture and the intensity of the moment with others who share and appreciate the experience. (Oldfather & West, 1994, p. 22)

With a responding audience, I re-imagined diverse levels and terrains in women's paths taken to being/becoming a teacher. To re-create the dimensions of depth uncovered, I have thought of the significance of the research and analysis as an experience, which belies the casual ambience underlying its intensity, as a hologram in which difficult questions/responses to people and places are posed, in which both deep structures and creative freedom are embodied.

"What I got in my life?" is one Nepalese woman's turning-point and rhetorical question she extends to her mother who just so happened to be sitting at her knee looking up with fierce pride at this "daughter as teacher." This unmarried mountain village Gurung teacher, very much like *Guru-heart* (another unmarried Gurung woman teacher in another village), presented themselves—and by virtue of their roles in a family without sons or, in the case of sons, without sons who could support their mothers—and their mothers as characters in story who mark symbolically life and death: According to Shaha (1992), in Nepal,

> It is with a mixed feeling of love and fear that the…the people worship the cosmic mother, who is represented in various mild and terrible forms in the temples of Nepal. This cosmic mother in various manifestations characterized by postures or symbols, joyous or horrendous, provides profound insights to keen observers and devotees of "becoming", which works through the dialectic of birth and death, procreation and elimination. (p. 116)

The passionate pursuit of new possibilities and perspectives goes on.

This Gurung woman teacher's question is not an idle question and neither are the Nepalese women student teachers' responses that wait to be told, to be critically reflected upon: For example, one future teacher wrote, "I was influenced by a lady teacher who was very…good in teaching. She had made the illiterate literate and had made the school environment good. I wanted to be like her." A second suggested that "when I saw other teachers I was interested to educate the illiterate village people." These are responses which need to be given back to Nepalese girls and women: "They provide/ the spindle around which new[-and-old]-spinning wool/ winds as it dreams its future" (Page, 1994). For this Nepalese woman student teacher, "when I was young I used to think to be like those who had served the country and village. I like to help the women who are suffering from illiteracy, prejudices and superstitions." These responses fit into a general shift in the Asian-Pacific region, a broad cultural change, reflected in the Oceanic movement,

> from a mythic conception of the world to a historical and problematic view of life, a gradual move from a position in oral tradition where magic and myth provide answers to important questions in a desacralised world in which myth and magic are no longer vital. (Subramani, 1985, p. 8)

Androcentric record-keeping and remembering in the world continues to the present day and operates in the transmission of the teachings to students, who usually learn a great deal about male figures and very little about female figures. In Buddhism, the biography of Yeshe Tsogyel suggests the male guru "has only recently praised" women's "accomplishments very highly and uttered a generalization about women's abilities that is as rare in Buddhist literature as in religious literature," as in literature, "altogether" (Gross, 1993, p. 99). She complains:

> I am a woman—I have little power to resist danger,
> Because of my inferior birth, everyone attacks me.
> If I go as a beggar, dogs attack me.
> If I have wealth and food, bandits attack me.
> If I do a great deal, the locals attack me.
> If I do nothing, gossips attack me.
> If anything goes wrong, they all attack me.
> Whatever I do, I have no chance for happiness.
> Because I am a woman, it is hard to follow the Dharma.
> It is hard even to stay alive! (in Tulku, 1983, p. 105)

In terms of building character, from Durga to dacoit (robber/bandit) are epic literary and oral (song and poetic) lines embedded in moral lines women on the path to being and becoming a teacher in Nepal must negotiate. In many cultures there is an attitude of inclusion as well as exclusion. In an epic world or classical composition it becomes more rare for unexpected or disruptive participants or characters to be invited and included, i.e.,

> "as a class of perfected objects....who can serve to carry art back from the unattainable world of divine perfections and bring it within the sphere of truly human endeavor"....so qualitative research may serve to alleviate the problem...referred to as the *elsewhereness of knowledge*. (Gioia, 1988, p. 107; Oldfather & West, 1994, pp. 24, 25; see also Boomer, 1987)

Sita and Durga are manifestations of the allegorical female principle underlying the traditional stories which get told and retold in Nepal: Durga is the uncontrollable agent; Sita is the faithful, submissive, devoted, and fertile wife, and these archetypal images of woman inform Nepal's present day society. Women have been reduced to fallen nature, brute nature, passive nature ("the field furrow") in stories and in epic and difficult terrain(s): From the beginning, in an oral and written literature of epic terrain, in the *Ramayana's* dark forest, women's "sexual insatiability was at the root of all problems" (Gowen, 1931/1968; Liddle & Joshi, 1986/1989). She represents "a degraded reality" (Lukács, 1974), a fallen epic world. Sita is the very antithesis of the epic hero; in order to be a man, her husband, Ram, seeks to resolve whether his wife has been unfaithful to him. In the Hindu scriptures, women are identified in allegorical terms:

> Women constantly suck the blood of men like leeches....That very woman whom man considers his beloved robs him of his manhood through sexual indulgence, and of his mind, his wealth and all his possessions. Hence is there any greater robber than woman? (Devi Bhagavat, in Rudra, 1975, p. 47)

In Nepal and elsewhere on the subcontinent, the "epic" influences society, but glimpses into an "epic" world are conveyed not only through female characters like Sita and/or Gandhari. Neelam Basnet's life story in Nepal is not flashy as strategy, since all good work, like that of prayer in aid, works in small increments—getting a hand to hold us here, another there—but her story reminds all of us that the slow, incremental, but nonetheless significant processes really began with the touch of nurture. A recurring image of her hand clasped, for a moment, in mine gave me the vision to face uncertainty while I was in Nepal. It is as if her own projects of courage "*will* have positive, expanding effects for years to come" (Aiken et al., 1988; emphasis added). By keeping these stories of women teachers and their human touch in mind, it is possible that "one can simultaneously maintain high standards and expectations and avoid succumbing to discouragement when these [images and ideas dis]appear [and the present moment remains] unfulfilled" (Aiken et al., 1988, p. 155).

Practising Nepalese women teachers tell us that what they have built in metaphorical and literal terms is real educational change in their respective schools and communities by the very fact of their examples of becoming and being not only a teacher, but teacher as mother, teacher as female author, teacher as peace-maker, teacher as heart, teacher as builder of the nation, and teacher as advocate of female education. Continuing in this "culture of improvisation, in its open-endedness," are both future and practising Nepalese women teachers who invited "in the unexpected contributor" (Oldfather & West, 1994). My life-history methodology and approach values inclusivity. Having found an interpretive community at the University of Alberta, who communicate ways of being "that involves both commitment and risk, boldness and vulnerability" (Said, 1994, p. 13), in oral and in literary forms, I believe we need to seek out in all countries the people who care to listen and respond in a diversity of forms.

"Constructivist epistemologies," which "attempt to understand and represent multiple constructions of experience," and "expanding notions about what counts as scholarly knowledge have opened the doors for teacher research...participatory research," narrative research, and "*educative research*" (Oldfather & West, 1994, p. 25; see also Carr & Kemmis, 1986; Clandinin et al., 1993c; Clandinin & Connelly, 1995; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1990; Lyons, 1995; Fine, 1992; Gitlin, 1990; Whyte, 1991). The resilience and resources of Nepalese women and the resources and resilience of those in Canada and elsewhere can yet be recombined in astonishing ways. To deal and listen to the world only "through the medium of intermittent horror stories, half-cocked panicky interventions, debt schedules, cultural blinkers, and the shipment of expensive weapons," well, "we have no right," no right at all, "to amputate the human family in that way" (Hitchens, 1994, p. 117; see also Hitchens, 1993). Sustained over time, the atrophy of human feelings for truly human endeavor is extended to a diversity of forms, in written forms, e.g., interpretation and criticism, in performance, in terms of ways of being and commitment to people and places.

Powerful within the worlds of art, education, and of qualitative research are critics:

> Criticism is an art of saying useful things about complex and subtle objects and events so that others less sophisticated, or sophisticated in different ways, can see and understand what they did not see and understand before. (Eisner, 1991, p. 3)

A German-Samoan writer and teacher of creating writing, Albert Wendt, points out that "in cultural terms there is no ideal world: cultures everywhere are always in a state of flux" (Subramani, 1985). The history of the hill and valley region of Nepal also reveal stories about warring factions, intermittent attacks, displaced kings and members of the elites, who,

> in spite of their interest in art, culture and literature…proved politically ineffective.…Set against the extravagance and degradation of the court life, the solid and lasting achievements of the common people in the field of agriculture and trade, as well as art, architecture and sculpture appear surprising. (Shaha, 1992, p. 103)

Education is also culture and vice versa; cultural vitality for succeeding generations will not be preserved, if one principle, e.g., the masculine or the feminine, the elite or the common, the traditional or the contemporary, the parent/teacher or the student, and so forth, is subtly dominant, while the other is merely its extension, functioning only as its consort (Gross, 1993; Matthewson, 1994; Subramani, 1985). Paradoxically, in the process of becoming teachers, women may also have to free themselves of their mythic and ancestral past, and actively desacralize them. Perhaps not, but I know that I did and in terms of what two Nepalese women student teachers suggested: "I found the school as a place for character building. I felt the teachers as the God and the parents," with this corollary I had already heard from my own mother, "We used to fear from teachers more than our parents." Subramani (1985) writes how

> the literary counterpart to the return-home is a search for formal possibilities in local art and culture.…The traditional artist [composer] must go on expressing a world-vision that is readily recognised by [her] own culture. On the other hand, the modern artist or writer must work from the state of disequilibrium [she] finds [herself] in and discover new ways of feeling and expressing [herself].…Together they can demonstrate what is constant and what is changing. (p. 10)

The next generation is constrained by the changed reality, i.e., encroachment of the outside world in ideas/images. In Nepal,

> if and when the girl extends her contact further, she has to contend with the discriminatory and stereotypical images of females portrayed by the media. Girls and women are either invisible or when given the occasional exposure, are depicted as being socially, economically, and emotionally dependent. The infrequent portrayals of independent, assertive women are usually those of the celluloid "vamp." (Gill, 1991, p. 7)

Two Nepalese women student teachers reveal a story/play with levels and dials, the current debate, when they envision their own and (as imaginative entities) their daughters' future: "I want my daughter to enjoy the life as mine. I like to give her freedom but she should not go watch movies skipping classes"; "I would let her study as she could and live on her own. I am restricted to go out, for a movie or elsewhere by my parents, but I would never do that with my daughter." Such writing, as in the development of a serious literature, reflects *mediation*, i.e., "when history reads myth" (Mishra, 1980), "the typical tenor or the movement of the [historic] consciousness" (Subramani, 1985). There is as yet no homogeneous reading public, the "universal reader," as Sartre (1950) puts it, "the people of the same period and community, who have lived through the same events, who have raised or avoided the same questions, having the same taste in their mouth" (p. 50). The consumers of this new literature are much more likely to be overseas teachers and critics. The charge as well might be what Wendt has argued "that in its serious aspect writing is an elitist preoccupation....But the writer's 'priviledged' position does not negate [her] own contribution" (Subramani, 1985, p. 11).

Both lament and laughter suggest the compression of stories and can be the mediator of transformation (Christ, 1987; Subramani, 1985). Shared lament and laughter has led me to seek more of the whole story. For instance, to understand what led to a shared sense of humor with *Guru-heart*, "a kind of spiritual experience" around "the changing of the female sex motif" (Christ, 1987; Gross, 1993).

An unmarried Newar[7] beginning teacher in Nepal said, "Oh [outtake of air] I think, like girl," and in her company I realize an exiled memory. In her company, and in the company of the "like-minded," which to her means "girl and same family, same parents [laugh]....I don't see any difference between [laugh]," I might have responded, too, "either would I" (life-history interview, 19 May 1993).

This exiled memory is a long lost lament which erupts at the moment I hear a young woman's easy laughter: My mother is in the hospital again and I am somewhere between 10 and 12 years old. As a child literally exiled to another household, one of my mother's brother's homes, while my three brothers are at my grandmother's house, visiting our father he asks us all who would like to go for an outing with him. I am the only one who puts up my hand. He says, "Okay, no one wants to go." I don't understand why he doesn't notice me. Now this seems a formative moment in light of the active/sustained/powerful contribution it has made to my framework in struggling to include women teachers in critical discussion. The writer, like the teacher-researcher, begins by clarifying her own perceptions, but in this process she clarifies the vision of others (Subramani, 1985). Goldmann (1975) in *Towards a Sociology of the Novel*, goes further and argues that a writer makes sense of her own life only in so far as she does this for her contemporaries and "writing in this sense becomes a collaborative endeavor" (Subramani, 1985).

A place for building in relationships

Do women and girls need to disown their own perceptions of their inhabited qualitative world(s) based on social beliefs, customs, and rituals? Do teachers and researchers and literary critics need to find new ways to listen and respond to what lies between Old and New Worlds? Kelly and Kelly's (1989) bibliography on women's education in the "Third World," which seems every bit as relevant to me as an exiled peasant/artisan daughter in Canada, reveals that despite the fact that teaching professions world-wide have become increasingly female it is notable that the literature is silent on how women enter teaching. The assumption implicit in much of the research is that entry into teacher training signals changes in women's roles. It is silent on the relationships between and amongst women and girls, and the paucity of studies and atrophy of understanding extends to content as well as the mode of education—educational methods, who teaches, who regenerates women's space, who critiques, and so forth—which affect education's role and responsibility in giving women greater control over their lives (see Parajuli & Enslin, 1990). Access is not enough (Bourque & Warren, 1990).

Access to education tends to be more limited for women and girls than for males, and the ever-increasing magnitude of female illiteracy does not bode well. According to World Bank/UNDP estimates, among the seven Asian countries, including Nepal, comprising the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, illiteracy is highest in Nepal—both sexes: 74%, females: 88%; however, Nepalese national statistics of adult illiteracy estimate a lower figure—both sexes: 65%, females: 82%. The proportion of women in the farming and related activities of the country indicates a more intensive role in feeding, reproducing, and serving the citizens of Nepal (MOEC/UNESCO, 1990), and "the increasing gap in literacy...between rural and urban areas means that, all in all, rural women are receiving the least benefit even from the new educational opportunities" (Basnet, 1991, p. 37). Neelam Basnet (1991) wrote that while "the national average of 18 percent represents an increase over the last thirty years, this estimate" of female literacy is skewed not only by "higher literacy levels among women living in urban areas," but dubious measures have been used to collect data on literacy,

> and, therefore, the real level is undoubtedly lower than the national rate suggests, especially in rural areas where access to reading materials is very much limited....Although substantive data is lacking, it seems that female literacy rates also vary from one place to another in the country, according to the distribution and accessibility of schools, the socio-economic status and levels of literacy of the household, division of labour and cultural expectation of women's roles. (pp. 36-7)[8]

Neelam Basnet (1991) states that "almost half of current literate females are girls between 6 and 14 years of age, indicating the important role schooling has recently played" and that

> basically, girls from literate, relatively wealthier and larger households, in which domestic labour is shared between several women, and who have

> relatively easy access to a school, seem to be much more likely to become literate than girls from poor, small, illiterate households which are far from a school. Female literacy tends to be higher in the central hills, in and around the capital, and in the western hills, relatively low female literacy levels are registered in the mountain districts, particularly in those of the Mid and Far West regions. (pp. 37-8)

Literacy is regarded in the dominant discourses to be important because the proportion of Nepalese women bearing a smaller number of children (1 to 2) is higher among women with a higher level of education (MOEC/UNESCO, 1990). Two future Nepalese women teachers suggest that because, in their estimate, most of the women are illiterate, "Nepal is very behind in education." Another Nepalese woman student teacher believes that "when there is no development of education we cannot think any kind of development in the country," while a fourth suggests that "enhancing female literacy, eliminating prejudice and traditions about female education" is a way of "providing access to education for all." These views are views which are shared by Neelam Basnet.

The World Bank's (1990) proposed curriculum model for Nepal does not elaborate on what the specific needs of girls are, and Joshi and Anderson (1994) also note how "even the very thorough" UNICEF (1987) report, *Children and Women of Nepal*, "does not come to grips with the materials currently being used in school, and is silent on the kind of reading materials which should be made available" (p. 179). One Nepalese woman student teacher has a suggestion: "Raise awareness about women's education; arrange adult literacy programmes for adult women so that they could provide education for their children; use of relevant curriculum and proper evaluation seem to be necessary." The 1992 report does point out "a significant feature in the non-education of girls…as the education level of the mother," and that

> the lack of education among women limits their awareness of the benefits of learning for their children. Unless women are educated, the efforts to open up learning opportunities to children from poor families is not likely to succeed. (National Planning Commission, HMG-N/UNICEF, 1992, p. 78)

There are complexities in stories about people and places that need to be told and critically reflected upon. For example, in one Nepalese woman student teacher's primary school, situated in a remote village, she relates that "there were only 2 girls in my class at that time due to the illiteracy of the parents." While another noted, "My parents were illiterate, but my brothers and sisters and I were educated. So they had positive opinion about the school." What do the terms *literate* and *illiterate* mean, in terms of people and places, in terms of Nepalese women (who are and who are becoming) teachers? One Nepalese woman student teacher's (maternal) grandfather "did not go to school, but he could read and write letters." Two Nepalese women student teachers noted that their (paternal) grandfathers were "fully literate"; while another suggested hers "was literate only." What does fully literate mean?

One Nepalese woman student teacher wrote, "to provide literacy for the development of the country" means to "make good citizen by being a good teacher," and for another, it means "to show the students [the] right path [to] serve the country."

Why do a number of future and practising women teachers write, shortly and sharply to the point, as more than one woman did about her aim to become a teacher, "because most of the women in Nepal are illiterate"? One woman student teacher responded that the "majority of people [men and women] are illiterate that inspires me to become a teacher and educate them and to develop any village." This desire presupposes another's belief: "We can understand the problem of village people. We can bring educational awareness among the illiterate village people." What does it mean as this Nepalese woman student teacher wrote "to want" and "to make the illiterate women literate"? One Nepalese woman student teacher suggested it meant "to educate people and make them aware of their rights."

There are a number of images and ideas in these Nepalese woman student teachers' writings to my question about "what would be the *good* things about working in a rural area?"; a rural area is associated most often with illiterate people and romantic, individualistic, and intransigent ideas/images about village life:

> •we can develop a village; we can make illiterate people literate; we can get more privilege;
>
> •one can make literate to illiterate village girls;

•to educate the illiterate village people and enhance the country in education;

•if we could work properly we can contribute a lot in the village;

•to help the people;

•teach them modern technology;

•to bring consciousness among the villagers;

•one can abolish illiteracy while working in a village. We get fresh atmosphere in the village to make us healthy;

•we get good environment, clean water, fresh vegetables etc. in a village;

•it has many privileges such as saving money, good climate;

•we can get good food to eat;

•we can teach many things and get a friendly atmosphere while working in a village area;

•our country is full of villages. It is necessary to develop the village if we wish to develop our country;

•the village people regard you a lot and feed you too;

•the good things about working in a rural area is getting love and respect;

•if one could work in co-operation with the village people, he or she would get the recognition;

•everything is available fresh and cheap. One can live in a healthy atmosphere;

•we get fresh air, fresh water and food as well as we can see beautiful forests and green hills while working in a village;

•there are many advantages to work in the village. As there are forests in the village we get rain which makes the field green;

- there is clean and calm environment;
- one may get chance to work for various community services;
- the village sisters will be educated and the village will be civilized;
- one should work for the development of the village and tell other people about that;
- because an educated person can make the other people literate and it will help the nation;
- can educate others; get respect as a teacher; pass time joyfully.

Education has brought change among the illiterate village women, yet a number of Nepalese women teachers told me they cannot now teach their unschooled mothers how to read. I realized in Canada that my question about teaching mothers to read was a "synergistic event": Seasoned performers

> learn to read the audience—adjusting their timing or drawing out certain... phrases that seem to have special appeal to those present....Similarly, qualitative researchers learn to "read" their participants—discovering which questions or issues are important to the insiders of the culture they are hoping to understand, and collaborating to shape the directions of the inquiry accordingly. (Oldfather & West, 1994, p. 24)

These daughter/mother stories of illiterate to literate women are a part of the "original scores," the "bare bones," the authority of tradition and the influence of oral literature "that provides just enough guidance for the [next group or generation's] collaboration" (Oldfather & West, 1994). There are stories waiting be told, written and read, about people and places to be developed as models. They serve "as an outline for the new event, rather than an untouchable and finished creation, not to be tampered with" (Oldfather & West, 1994, p. 24). One future Nepalese woman teacher has such a story: "My mother has received services like nutrition knowledge, family planning devices and literacy." Another future teacher wrote how "I used to teach the adult literacy class. Most of them were old people who put their fingerprints instead of signature." We need to know more about what each and every one of these stories means, individually and as a process of building a curriculum out of community; what stories put back together can re-construct, generate, in terms of, new perspectives, new possibilities, and new ways of learning, e.g., in this Nepalese woman student teacher's sketch of a story:

> I never remained absent when I was in primary school. My parents were illiterate and so they mostly worked in the fields. I also thought I had to do the same if I didn't study and could not teach as my teachers in a school.

When interpreted by another and another, this work "comes alive" just "as lyrical, exquisite melodies…elicit deep emotional response from sensitive listeners" (Oldfather & West, 1994).

Tell who or what accompanies you on the journey:

My mother's Black Forest story

My mother's Black Forest anecdotal, allegorical short story has come back to haunt me, *tant pour tant*; hence, it calls for an informed rejoinder; it has more meaning for me than all the formal education I ever had: "For in the beginning of literature is the myth, and in the end as well" (Borges, 1964). Here, the solitary art, "the short story remains by its very nature remote from the community—romantic, individualistic, and intransigent" (O'Connor, 1962, p. 21).

My mother told me about having to pass through the Black Forest alone on her way to her first school in Germany under Night and Fog around the time of the Second World War. In post-patriarchal and feminist terms, her feeling of being without a guide and having to figure it out for herself is generally correct. Like a travelling bard through time along comes a different daughter to this literally, dissimilar, yet metaphorically, frighteningly familiar place, in Canada and in Nepal. My mother's epic terrain is also

> where you might come across a good spirit or where you might come across a bad spirit, you might come across wild animals, you might come across treasure [laugh]. It's a kind of unknown space. When you walked from one village to another [in certain parts of Nepal], walking two hours through unknown forest [was] not unusual. Mostly I walked with my friends or in a group. I think most of the village people do that unless they have a special or urgent need. You can make a friend while you are walking on the trail, you just talk and make a friend for the journey [laugh]. (Hridaya Bajracharya, personal communication, 31 March 1995)

Without quite knowing what awaited me or even what or who accompanied me on the journey, my doctoral program of work led me to investigate the barriers to women and girls' participation in the educational activities of Nepal. I was most surprised by the reception. Nepalese future and practising teachers told me they had been waiting for someone who would come and listen. That someone, as it turned out for them, happened to be me. My story is part of the answer. My participation in this project has awakened in me a profound desire to expand intellectually, artistically, and spiritually, in women's and in teachers' studies, in oral and in literary dimensions.

Casey (1993), Clandinin (1993a), and Middleton (1993) best exemplify the most current analyses employed to honor the lives of ordinary yet extraordinary women (who are and who are becoming) teachers: as regenerative, imaginative dialogue between the dominant discursive text(s) and women teachers' interpretations, as models of diversity, in terms of perspectives and possibilities played out within ascribed roles in the home, school, neighborhood, and community of the North/South hemispheres. Is it a modern desire to dilute the demands of taken-for-granted customs and ceremonies on the lives of women and on the lives of teachers? These authors have formulated research projects and theoretical positions and passed them through the regulatory checks of educative relations: those with and for whom they have worked inside their respective institutions, those with and for whom they also "wrote, talked, wondered, and improvised," restorying their own lives, and imagining new possibilities for teacher education (Clandinin et al., 1993b). As women and as teachers in a postmodern world, where we live multiple lives, the need to conserve our time and resources in order to survive economically and to meet the needs of the modern economic system has most often resulted in the short story form.

Clandinin and others suggest that

> it is important...to have a diversity of possible stories in order that each of us could "look at multiple lives to test and shape our own....I believe in the need for multiple models [and lives are not models, stories are models], so that it is possible to weave something new from many different threads."...Each sharing of stories "provokes a dialogue of comparison and recognition, a process of memory and articulation that makes one's

> experiences available as a lens of empathy. We gain even more from comparing notes and trying to understand the choices of our friends." (Hogan et al., 1993, p. 208; see also Bateson, 1989, p. 16; Heilbrun, 1988, p. 37)

Guru-lekhika, the young Rai teacher, *Guru-heart*, the mountain village Gurung teacher, the Newar Dean of Education, Rukmani Bajracharya, Neelam Basnet, and other women I encountered in Nepal identify, in varying degrees, with their mothers. This then is some place to begin to understand what is being said by both daughter and mother. These once unexamined stories of relationship and experience coming to me in the most unexpected moment, that is, when I thought we were simply going to relate the story of how it is we came to be teachers. And in these stories, female protagonists ask you to read in your own perspectives: enrich and validate this understanding or challenge it by adding new elements that may have been omitted, change the emphasis or importance of various parts of the analysis, present your own connection, analysis, narrative or moral, where you disagree with the perspective, and state where you agree. As participants in the ongoing story of development and education, we need time to listen to bridge the meaning of levels and terrains. *Guru-lekhika* and *Guru-aamaa*, and other women as teachers in Nepal and elsewhere, as mothers, as daughters, stress "time to listen" for what it is they are attempting to make in their work for and with people, that is, bridges between the "objective" (structure) and the "subjective" (culture), between nature and nurture, past, present, and future, dominant memory and commonplace understandings, and personal/individual and large-scale changes. It is in the relationship between time to teach and time to listen that the people must have encouragement and access to some people and their stories in order to build bridges, e.g., between a mother and a daughter, between being a daughter and becoming a teacher and moving beyond one's narrow circle. This is something old and new, woven from many different threads, and something to look through, as experience is a lens of empathy, to understand the choices of others on dissimilar, yet frightening and familiar journeys in different places, at different times.

The door that I had to pass through and one that seems to open up words/worlds to me of shared reality is "sympathetic resonance" (Estés, 1992). Clandinin and Haughey helped me to "reconnect with the deepest part" (brandt, 1992; writer-in-residence University of Alberta, 1995-6) of myself, by listening and sharing stories, these teachers helped me to live in the middle of learning events, which for me occurs personally and professionally across diverse terrains. They helped me to an increased ability to identify the values, beliefs, and assumptions shaping my responses to build an educative relationship with future and practising women teachers in Nepal, in Canada, and elsewhere (from journal entry, 1 October 1993). And this, for me, also represented a significant shift, "a renewed understanding and valuing, on the part of all learners within…community, of the practitioner as an effective and intentional professional, at the heart of the child's learning" (McPhie, 1995, p. 194).

Coming across epic terrain

While I walked and rode on the back of an elephant into similar, yet changed Nepalese terrain, Hridaya Bajracharya walked across epic, dark, thick forested terrain, *char koshe jhadi*,[9] about which conventional adventure stories in Nepal abound, during the village study component of his Master's degree in Nepal:

> *It was thrilling*. You don't know what is out there. You are always cautious that you might wander away from the actual trail. You have to be alert so you do not stray from the path. If you do, you may be in trouble, you don't know where you may be landing. There were certain places which are known to be the hiding places of bandits. There were certain points we had to pass through, we had to be extra cautious. You might be found hanging from a tree, naked, those sorts of things are known to happen. There are places where you have to be cautious of the wild animals. While passing through, you are cautious, a little bit nervous. You don't want to show your nervousness, you want to be brave. Still you have that fear inside, you want to be close to other people. Once you pass through that all of a sudden a different atmosphere comes, the way you speak may have a different tone, a different flavor, than when in the area you had to be extra cautious. Metaphorically speaking, as you said that may be what we do in real life too. (personal communication, 31 March 1995)

McPhie (1995, pp. 188, 190) suggests "to discuss publicly our personal/professional thoughts and actions" as future and practising teachers, within and across predominant educational domains (e.g., the student; educational environments; the curriculum; the role of the teacher; and evaluation), "is risky, exciting—and highly unusual. (Yet it is exactly the process we require of student teachers during their practica.)" Future and practising Nepalese women teachers' stories of experience, i.e., of how they have come to be teachers is a place where I, too, "am struck by human fragility and the need, emphasized time and time again…to build [a safe] environment where participants can feel successful," especially when articulating exiled memories, beliefs, ideas and values seldom expressed, often difficult to articulate, to generate feelings that each and every one is responsible for the success of an educational program. When is the best time to bring other stakeholders into such critical terrain?

The Brahmin males who had helped in gaining access and in the translation of the Nepalese women student teachers' questionnaires were very explicit. They told me that these young women becoming teachers had nothing to say (they were not born to lead), they expressed themselves poorly, for example, with poor grammar, and great pains were taken to translate literally the poor grammar of these young women studying to be teachers. This is not meant to be a criticism for these men were very able teachers, but opportunities for women in Nepal require co-operation from these men. These men seem alienated from "field-dependent thinking," which is a way of knowing that requires asking "about the circumstances in which a person comes to believe and the consequences of that belief in her life" and, which requires learning "to value 'connected' ways of conversing" (Ruddick, 1989/1990, p. 96). It is recursive (active and reciprocal) terrain, which requires not only "a patient, sympathetic listening to the complexities and uncertainties of another's experience quite unlike the acceptance of the given terms required for abstraction" (Ruddick, 1989/1990, p. 96), it requires something from the listener. What the young women were trying to say about coming across epic terrain(s), when they wrote, "I cannot describe," "or it is hard to say," and given all the incomplete sentences and nascency of thought expressed in a few words and then abruptly left is important and is my focus in trying to listen. The quality of their words depends upon each listener's hearing, responding to, and appreciating what he or she is being told. One woman student teacher wrote, "I am sick" in answer to my question about what was the most exciting part of her life and this was not translated (yet noted by the Brahmins as "not relevant") until I made the demand. I could understand her answer outside of the context of the straight lines, the harsher exigencies of the neatness or exactness, suggested by the fit of a form not disputed (in this case, my own life-history questionnaire).

"Aspirations for a literary culture by an educated group is akin to the process of becoming" (Subramani, 1985) and coming across epic terrain. *Guru-lekhika* extends the process of becoming and being not only a teacher but teacher as author by making her literary work of teaching tales available to those who cannot afford it:

> We get royalty, very little royalty for our books, you know? But I don't think for the royalty, because it is my *work*. I want to write and write all my life, you know? Not only for the money. Money, we are not getting enough money. But little money we are getting, you know. So what other, uh some, some writers what they do, they bring their book from the publisher and they just sell it. But I buy my book myself and I just send it to the villagers, to schools, and to a library in the village, and to some villagers or poor people, if they want to read this book. (life-history interview, 29 April 1993)

The story of the coming of the daughter across epic terrain to become a teacher, e.g., a forest, for some future and practising women teachers, in Nepal as elsewhere, is a realm of quiet transformations. I heard these same creative urges: One Nepalese woman student teacher wrote that her aim is "to eliminate illiteracy from the village, neighbourhood community and the district." Another Nepalese woman student teacher wrote, "in Nepal women's literacy is very low. So I decided be a teacher to make literate the Nepalese women." A third noted, "the condition of our illiterate village children made me decide to become a teacher." This Nepalese woman student teacher suggested, "I want to contribute to the history and development of Nepali literature," and this one, "I want to share my experience with others."

We can find female images and their migrations in ideas where the girl child first awakens to patterns, which make sense of her own dreaming. At a very personal level, I think the most affecting capture or theft of treasure I encountered in Nepal, and I encountered a number of stories which capture this growing tension between increasing confinement and the imaginal, in the aspiration or desire to create the world anew, is a short, short story written by one woman student teacher in the life-history questionnaire as if she has no right to visions or dreams:

> I would like to be a pilot, and would choose training for that. But as I am a daughter I am not allowed to go out. It was my fate to be born as a daughter and work in the household. They think us as a machine to produce babies. Whether it is the fate of Nepalese women or their duty to be a slave of others, I cannot be a pilot even in my dream though I very much aspire for it.

When I view confinement in the imaginal through the frame of my own life, I worry I might have killed myself if such a strong image had been thwarted even before it had a chance to sprout wings and fly. As Oldfather and West (1994) suggest, "only when we are able to develop a clear notion of the epistemological frames that guide our work can we access these imaginative realities and find ways to put away" what it is written upon, "and in Bateson's (1989) words, fly free" (p. 25). For what it is worth, I am brought back sharply to consider what is it that I was always dreaming about on our regular, family, Sunday drives from Calgary to Banff. And most recently, driving from Calgary to Banff with my mother's youngest sister, I caught it again by looking up at the Rocky Mountains (not half as large as those in Nepal), a towering visage, too, which speaks to Nepalese women and girls as my dreaming out of a car window speaks to me. Something about the feeling that I took from that dreaming (that wishful thinking of the best kind) also existed for me when I was a young girl sitting in a darkened theatre listening to the words of the actors and actresses. And my yearning translated into a desire to one day be the one to speak the words, to draw from such yearning something sublime, as if I could transform all that I wished into an act, to write "as [if] the world were now but to begin" (Hamlet).

Sometimes I find myself enmeshed in other's words/worlds: "The use of life-history methods as pedagogical techniques can help teachers and students to understand the circumstances of one another's possibilities" (Middleton, 1993, p. 35), to put one another's "emotional experience of life on to the map of the world" (Oldfield, 1989), in so many forms, i.e., poetry and drama, "where the challenge *is* grappled" (Everson, 1970), e.g., "to generate, in literature and in life, systems," as an "imaginative entity in which we can be as much at home as a character in a work of fiction" (Scholes, 1979, p. 217).

Similarly, Geertz (1973) reveals how religion is a powerful, pervasive and long-lasting system of symbols that produce "moods," which transform "myths into ethos, symbol system into social and political reality," and "motivations," which "have both psychological and political effects, because they create inner conditions," providing the talismans, the rituals, the charms of stories which stay the course of time. Christ (1987) writes how

> religion has such a compelling hold on the deep psyches of so many people, feminists cannot afford to leave it in the hands of the fathers....The symbols associated with these important rituals cannot fail to affect the deep or unconscious structures of the mind of even a person who has rejected these symbolisms on a conscious level. (p. 118)

For example, the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* Epics, which, ideally, "enable people to cope with crisis situations in human life (death, evil, suffering) and to pass through life's important transitions (birth, sexuality, death)" (Christ, 1987, p. 118), "continue for ages yet to reflect the morning-star of Aryan civilization, fixed, as it were, in the heaven of Indra, and irremovable" (Birdwood, 1880, p. 31). So intricate is that which developed under the complex of ancient Hindu mythology that the 1984 *New Larousse Encyclopedia of Mythology* uses a paradisiacal metaphor of epic grandeur and loss: "an inextricable jungle of luxuriant growths. When you enter it you lose the light of day and all clear sense of direction" (in *Mankind's search for God*, 1990, pp. 97-8). Hence, many stories have a sacred dimension, which orient a person, following Crites (1971) writes Christ (1980), to

> "great powers that establish the reality of their world." These...may not be named divinities and they need not speak out of whirlwinds for their presence to be felt....They sometimes provide revelation when the self is at a loss—when she doesn't know where to turn. They may provide a sense of meaning and value which is more potent that that offered by conventional stories. They may ground a person in powers of being that enable her to challenge conventional values or expected roles. (p. 3)

Following Poovey (1989), White (1992) maintains that "ideals of gender are not fixed but variable, they are a matter of debate in themselves, and these debates may serve as the site of other conflicts" (p. 11). One woman student teacher in Nepal wrote, "My family sent the sons to the boarding schools and the daughters to the ordinary schools," hence, it was "the sons [who] had *all* the liberties." Stories of quests speak of liberties across epic terrain(s), but what were those liberties and what did one Nepalese woman student teacher demand in return? The preoccupation with individual freedom is overcome in her question; the quest shifts toward communal responsibility:

> All should get equal rights and privileges. I am not satisfied with the education of Nepal. If there was proper education why the children of rich people go to study in foreign countries and do not return. Why they despise their own motherland?

According to this in-service woman teacher, "the primary level [of] education should aim at building children's creative activity....The children in the boarding school get pressure [which] may cause different problems and hence deteriorate their creative ability." These women suggest that alienating forms have the potential to make the Nepalese person unfit to participate in his or her own culture, they take up a middle position in development, one that understands the value of tradition, but also that the relationship between traditional culture and creative ability is no longer an immutable reality. A Hindu woman in another setting, another time and place, Kamala Das (1980), expresses a similar sentiment about what it means to be a woman coming across epic terrain on the threshold of "flying free" in her poem "The Old Playhouse":

> You planned to tame a swallow, to hold her,
> In the long summer of your love so that she would forget
> Not the raw seasons alone, and the homes left behind, but
> Also her nature, the urge to fly, and the endless
> Pathways of the sky. (p. 52)

An ever-deepening spiral

Migration in terms of *rite de passage* consists of backward/forward movements in an upward/downward spiral. Returning to the problem of the exiled one is that sort of spot where we might also return to gain some shift in time/place from a cyclic to a progressive perspective. From exile and "transcendental homelessness" (Lukács, 1974) comes a new awareness, "a different sort of attitude to home and country" (Subramani, 1985).

My own history offers a stark lesson. I grew up in a condition of intimate exile, absorbing habits of thought and practice native to an epic terrain I thought I never knew. In Nepal, Nepalese women and I spoke of moments when life's path seemed clear or when we stopped in our tracks and wondered on parts, when we could not see the forest for the trees, when the terrain presented huge boulders in our way, which we might just want to clamber over, or, in my case, to present a broad shoulder, that is, to keep trying to lift and to peer at what is underneath (Margaret Haughey, personal communication, 25 April 1995). In a broad sense, all articulations of experiences have a narrative element, and all are teachers. In the realm of the ordinary and the heroic, sharing our perceptions of the compelling forces with which we contended, choices we made, our feelings about what we did or did not do in our lives has potential to develop a willingness to imagine other views.

One main story of progress in Nepal is cyclic and tells us that "Nepalese society is patriarchal and religious" (Joshi & Anderson, 1994). According to Gross (1993),

> Contemplative traditions worldwide encourage reflection on experience by means of simple and brief lists into which the myriad details of kaleidoscope daily events can be subsumed....Furthermore, in a religious symbol system, there are real advantages to associating one pole of a dyadic unity with femaleness and the other with maleness....Unless such a set of symbols is truly complementary, mutual, non-hierarchical, and precisely balanced, however, it would become a powerful tool for reinforcing gender inequities. (pp. 198-200)

According to this Nepalese woman student teacher, as she gingerly negotiates the epic terrain between Old and New Worlds and the effects of technology in the developing world, "Even though men and women are the wheels of a cart," whether it be a great bullock-cart or a chariot, "women are supposed as the machine to produce babies." Her question might well be, whether at some level, human beings are limited by the symbolism associated with either the masculine or the feminine principles or the balance between. A powerful pantheon of symbols, in Nepal, subtly refigures rugged terrain: there is primal, perennial tension across seasons, across play, time, and space; crucial issues not yet critically reflected upon by future and practising teachers and stakeholders in education.

"The Mahayana School of Buddhism, or the Great Vehicle," which "describes the *yanas* or 'careers' taught by various schools under the parable of the chariots," held a great attraction for the people of the hill region, in Nepal, who described it "as a great 'bullock chariot'" compared to the older sects or schools collectively described as "the Low Vehicle" (Shaha, 1992, pp. 106-8). The parable of the chariots I came to recognize as a metaphor for thoughts or feelings which have been sustained despite "harsh interruptions" (Middleton, 1993), which recur in sites of cultural challenge. The popular deity and legendary figure in Nepali religious life, Matsyendranatha, appears to combine all three elements of the Nepalese pantheon (aboriginal and other nature spirits, Buddhist, and Hindu deities) in one masculine figure: "The cart festival of Matsyendranatha is attended by both Hindus and Buddhists with *equal reverence and enthusiasm*" (Shaha, 1992, p. 120; emphasis added; see also Landon, 1928, p. 216). One Nepalese woman student teacher overcame a taken-for-granted overlay of custom and accepted the male professor's challenge with regard to a general reluctance to answer my life-history questionnaire in English (about which I was indifferent) in her education class on a regional campus of Tribhuvan University. Unwittingly, I had arrived in the middle of a much larger debate in terms of her story. She wrote this first line in English and the rest in Nepali, both languages that are not her mother tongue (she is Gurung):

> *Why is different son and daughter? Therefore Nepali is not educated man.* Nepal is far behind in education. It is but obvious because most of the Nepalese think that girls/women are spoiled if they are educated. But all of the people cannot be educated only by giving boys...access to education.

Here a future Nepalese woman teacher's words are staged as a debate, between a familiar, important, and basic pair of feminine and masculine principles—wisdom and compassion—as elaborated and personified in the Mahayana concept of "enlightened heart":

> between a highly developed female and a male representative of the older viewpoint. He is always astounded and disgruntled by the woman's intelligence. She always confounds him in debate. He always asks her why, if she is so realized, she is not a man. At this point two motifs end the story. In one variant, the female then magically transforms her body into a male body. In the other, she retains her female body, demonstrating by logic or magic the utter relativity and unimportance of sexual differentiation. (Gross, 1993, p. 10)

To silence women was a dominant control tactic common to both the Mahayana and Vedantic schools of thought through "the religious use of sexual symbolism in which each Buddha or Bodhisattva is provided with a female counterpart *in the same way*," in the Epics and Puranas, "each god has a Sakti (female counterpart)" (Shaha, 1992, p. 109; emphasis added).

Frazer (1898/1970) suggests for me what forms here is a deeply engrained, narrative structure that goes back and forward in time and ultimately places strict limits upon improvisation. The only literary record we possess of the early incursion of fair-skinned Aryan tribes amid the darker indigenous inhabitants is that preserved in Prayers and Hymns, Epics and Puranas, the earliest written history, which,

> comes from the Vedas, the Aryan religious books.…The Aryans held a radically different view of women from that prevailing within the indigenous culture. They brought with them a pantheon of predominantly male gods, the patriarchal joint family, and a three-class social structure, divided into kshatriyas (warriors and aristocracy), brahmins (priests) and vaishyas (commoners). At first there was no caste consciousness, no hereditary occupations and no rules about marriage within the class. The development of this form of social organisation into a caste structure was a slow process which only began when the Aryans, having established dominance over the native population around 1500 B.C., began to class the indigenous people and those of mixed descent as outsiders, relegating them to a fourth category of sudras (servants) and excluding them from the Vedic religion. (Liddle & R. Joshi, 1986/1989, p. 61; see also Thapar, 1966; Wolpert, 1977)[10]

These deep, spiralling structures "were laid down by the brahmin law-givers, and although they were portrayed as rigid rules, there was in fact a great deal of flexibility within the system" (Liddle & R. Joshi, 1986/1989; see also Thapar, 1966).[11] G.P. Joshi and Anderson (1994) and King (1987), along with "some of the 19th Century reformers and the revivalists of the 20th Century women's movement," regard the Vedic period as the "Golden Age," e.g., "when women's education prospered," and "as a time of liberality for women. Yet compared with the value accorded to women in the matriarchal culture, it was far from ideal" (Liddle & R. Joshi, 1986/1989, p. 61). Women teachers in Nepal pointed out what I understood and rebelled against having grown up in a family under the shadow of the Aryan impact on women in Old and New Worlds. In many parts of the global village,

> A vicious cycle ensues: Girls are kept home to help the family subsist day to day. Uneducated, they cannot compete with boys for wages when they grow up. Women end up earning less, making boys a better educational investment in the parents' eyes. This exacts a development cost in terms of lost opportunities to slow population growth and to raise incomes, productivity, and quality of life. (Bellew, Raney, & Subbarao, 1992, p. 55)

Responding to this ever-deepening spiral, woman student teachers in Nepal wrote laments and chants: For one, "Women should also get freedom like men. They should get chance of education. They [are] made men's servant but should be given chance to compete." Women student teachers suggested primary schools and teacher training "should provide knowledge about health; should provide knowledge about small family; should create healthy educational environment," and "women should be involved in teacher's training program."

The off-day: A conversation becomes a story spiral

In a three-teacher life-history interview (16 May 1993) that took place in Nepal in an empty classroom (while it rained heavily outside) at a village, public, primary/secondary school near a road (covered as it was with a shallow lake of monsoon waters, and the taxi driver had difficulty staying on the "road" for it seemed to merge with the surrounding fields under water), these teachers best illustrated a commonality in their story spiral about the off-day. The day of the interview was a Sunday, a working-day in Nepal, and I had asked these women a question that I had asked the other teachers interviewed. I realized suddenly that I was asking them about what they had done on a Saturday (which is commonly referred to by them as the "off-day"). I felt that significance was to be gained in understanding what these teachers do during a day in their lives at home and school, but I realized in the field that there was something else waiting to be told, even when I did not fully understand all the Nepali that was being spoken. The kind of active listening I engaged in was fully intent on bodies and faces and the qualitative world. The soft drum-beat of the rain on the roof over our heads lent itself as the backdrop; two boys listening outside the slightly ajar door lent a conspiratorial tone to the interview. I began to "hear" a commonality, in terms of rhythm and tempo, in terms of emotional overlay, among three teachers. I heard these voices unto speech before I knew what all their words meant as a soundscape, a story spiral, encountered in choral work, from my voice/speech classes and choral speaking practice in rehearsal halls and on the stage.

I asked these three women, who showed up at the same time and I took that to mean that they desired to be interviewed together, to describe a day in their lives, and though I hesitated for a moment around the notion of "off-day" (is there such a day?), I did not stop the flow of words:

> *Linda:* Describe what you did yesterday, from the minute that you got up until the minute you went to bed? What you did yesterday on your day off?
>
> *Secondary (History) teacher:* Yesterday is the off-day.
>
> *Linda:* [interrupting] like what time you got up in the morning too.
>
> *Secondary (History) teacher:* Mm. For us. For the employed women, the off-day is invaluable and in that invaluable day, we, from the early morning to night, work. It could be the domestic chores and/or any other extra program. We make program for that. According to that program, in Saturday, we have a lot of work in house, like washing clothes, cleaning house, marketing, there are a number of works like this and we finish these works and sometimes we visit our relatives, enjoy with them. Particularly, yesterday was an off-day and we were engaged with our domestic chores. From the morning to night. At night, we did no more work. Just routine domestic work. Generally, we work up to 10 at night. After ten we finish our work. (translation, three teacher life-history interview, 16 May 1993)

Here I am nonplussed again at having taken-for-granted the dramatic, mimetic abilities, as a listener, I gained from drama classes, which also classed me for a time as an outsider and only by some with an economic or sociological orientation in the academic terrain in development studies in my department in Canada. Qualitative research as taught at that time, and there are multiple dimensions of qualitative research, seemed less improvisatory in nature than that described here. The Gurung secondary (Science) teacher looks at me wondering and laughing. She asks me in English: "Can you understand her?" I smile. The Brahmin woman secondary (History) teacher speaks in Nepali, and these women continue to speak in Nepali: The secondary (History) teacher indicating to the researcher said, "She records here and translates [later]. She does not understand. Nothing" (translation, three teacher life-history interview, 16 May 1993). The phrase was turned around, because there was belief that I did understand something, and hence we all four participated in a shared culture which carries common (but not identical) repertoires, and a common body of knowledge that allows us to make sense together. I was guided by a deep structure of story circle progressions and themes:

> *Secondary (Science) teacher:* The off-days are invaluable for we service-holder. We always wait for off-days. Eagerly wait. And in Saturday. It is off-day. But we have to do a lot of work, um, only a day, weekend. Whether we do domestic chores, um, particularly yesterday, I was heavily engaged in domestic works. *I got no time for outing*. Um, when I got up in the morning, I started cleaning the house. All works. A week-long work, piled works. And then cooking. Feed the children. Feed all. Um, other works, um, outside work. More than that domestic work. So, I did not get time to go outside. No outside work um, all day long domestic work during Saturday, the off-day.
>
> *Linda:* Sounds like a lot [chuckling with the teachers].
>
> [All teachers laugh.] (translation, three teacher life-history interview, 16 May 1993)

The Brahmin woman secondary (History) teacher said: "Whoever says the story, more or less the same, for all." But as I learned in my drama classes, all must be included in story circles, and in this story spiral, I acknowledged the Brahmin woman, I acknowledged the Gurung woman secondary (Science) teacher, but instinctually I also turned to the Chhetri primary teacher ("I don't have qualifications. Just high school pass. SLC") who then said:

> [Laughs] Okay. Once a week off-day. Saturday. On that day, it is invaluable day, I would say. *Because that day, we desperately wait.* When

> it comes we clean house. Take care of the house, do extra job. We plan in our schedule, on the off-day, Saturday, we do domestic chores. *Let me say, as my friend said, I could not go for outing.* I was busy with domestic chores. All day long [laughing]. (translation, three teacher life-history interview, 16 May 1993)

Casey (1993) acknowledges in the North American context what I found to be true in this women teachers' conversation circle or story spiral in Nepal. "Mockery and laughter" and a chorus who pick up and extol on that thread of insight "can be an important part of political expression" in narrative structuring. This is after all an expressive art (e.g., divine comedy), which retains the mark of disappearing footprints: "Let me say, as my friend said, I could not go for outing. I was busy with domestic chores. All day long [laughing]." These words and women's laughter retain the mark or model of an old story, an integral part of the storyteller's art, which frames the aperture of women's and girls' experience in an ironic mood: *Laugh because there is nothing else to do.*[12]

As Subramani (1985) points out, "the story-teller must be saved from posing too seriously," which "would mean denying the significance of laughter. The essence of joking in the oral narrative is laughter, necessary for releasing tension and overcoming pain" (p. 143). "Irreverence does not imply lack of seriousness" (Oldfather & West, 1994). While much of the relatively new project of being and becoming a woman teacher in Nepal is still about learning and experimenting, women and girls tend to be displaced first: They have that experience to draw on. These women found that as job-holders they do not have any hours on Saturday, a day to go outside, to visit relatives, to spare for an outing. Hence, they laugh, and I with them, we all laugh at such a notion. Laughter serves to emphasize and to expose mythological elements, to give voice to quiet dimensions of depth uncovered here as reader's theatre, as story spirals, as "deep structures."

This raises a question in hindsight: Why, in spite of literacy being promoted for more than two decades, has little or no written literature developed with and by women and girls in Nepal, especially for the curricula in primary and secondary schools? Is it also because

> literary production and consumption, presupposes certain levels of literacy, physical and mental well-being, leisure and material affluence: the material

> conditions for writing and reading include economic resources, shelter, lighting and privacy. (Eagleton, 1943, p. 49)

Boas (1955) put forward the hypothesis, more relevant to oral literature and perhaps less satisfactory in accounting for written works that often emerge during a period of social tension or crisis, which relates art to the amount of leisure and/or serenity afforded by a social system.[13] As women and as teachers, are our stories forever to be depicted and responded through a single (heroic) character in a carefully contrived plot?[14] Subramani (1985) points out

> two sorts of problems associated with the reception of literature. An audience close to the oral tradition needs to be understand the different kind of relationship that the written word establishes with its audience. It needs to understand the tendency of written works to confront them with the actualities of life, however disturbing they might be. (p. 155)

This bears the question of whether what has been written and described by Nepalese women who are and who are becoming teachers will be regarded as suitable for teaching in the primary and secondary schools. The potential for censorship/self-censorship remains.

Like a late-comer to a changed, yet seemingly changeless scene

Eventually we, all, "must lie down where all the ladders start/ In the foul rag and bone shop of the heart" (Yeats), and, hence, "our stories ought to judge and interpret the world" (Cynthia Ozick, in *The Globe and Mail*, 20 May 1995). As an outsider, my story of the coming of the daughter across epic terrain suggests as well that different daughters should not have to spend so much time alone in a dark forest on the path to being and becoming a teacher nor to have to go for further education at their own expense. In Nepal, the conflict is essentially between individualism and collective life. Is there a need to delve into the "void" to create from that experience? A dream I have had many times as an actress is one of being a late-comer to a changed scene, where I do not know the name of the play and I have no script to follow; hence, I have to improvise, while it seems as if everybody else knows their lines.

Nepalese women future and practising teachers' stories speak to me of many levels of terrain, which I have had to negotiate many times without adequate adult female instruction:

the rocks, the forest, the dream or the wish that beckons, what it means going overseas or out of bounds, the yearning that tends toward the orchard, that speaks of return to the motherland. There is some permanence in nature and in femaleness where these authors take refuge. They spoke of liberties and moments of freedom, alternative possibilities/perspectives of systems, if only in their visions/dreams.[15] One student teacher emphasized that a daughter "should not experience a life full of bondage but live in freedom like a son," while another felt a daughter should not have to experience "poverty and non-schooling" (see also Stallard, Ehrenreich, & Sklar, 1983).

Nepalese women as teachers confirm mothers and daughters as a people and places of significance in the story of being and becoming a teacher. They have offered wisdom and compassion, what Casey (1993) calls a "listening heart" or a "disposition to empathy," which sees feelingly "into the heart of the deepest relationship in every family," includes seeing "the bond between generations of women" (Olsen & Jussim, 1989), the experiences of that relationship, the continuities and discontinuities, the vision of a possible community between and among women and girls. But perhaps this is a story I, alone, needed to hear. We work within the limits and opportunities of our respective artistic and intellectual environments. Nepalese women do not have to turn to an outsider, as I have so often had to do, for insight into gender, culture, or a people, and a place, and they do not individually necessarily share my view.

In Nepal, I found women have also travelled away from those they love, even while the ethos of family and home is so deeply ingrained that entire lifetimes are sacrificed to it. In this way, I confront the reader with the relatively closed worldview (*Weltanschauung*) of my own displaced family in Canada, having found no secure anchorage in that environment. In terms of arriving in Canada, the women in my extended family were also confronted with a world that was anything but a fulfilment of their vision of the promised land. My maternal grandfather moved his family from Germany in response to the recruiters and their Canadian propaganda about the possibilities of escape from landless reality. My mother still dreams about living on the land, with an orchard, but to no avail; my father does not.[16]

A major culture-busting movement has occurred in Nepal over the last few decades. In order for girls to have the access to education they now enjoy in Nepal, it was necessary for a brave few to buck Nepal's engrained social system, which often saw women as little more than beasts of burden. Neelam Basnet and her family are shining examples of the brave few:

> My neighbors they [are] always criticizing me. I go to school because there was only one, I was [the only girl] in the school. And there [were] 500 hundred, more than 500 hundred...boys, and they criticize me always. The girls, oh, Mr. So-and-So [her father] he [is] sending [his] daughter to school alone and she will not be a good citizen, she will not be [uncomfortable pause] They are that way!...I feel ver—something very bad. They don't know the importance of education. They don't know why...girls they must educate. (life-history interview, 19 February 1993)

Here is a courageous, imaginative woman. Hers is a remarkable story: it is framed in terms of the migrations inherent in the "different daughter" motif, shaped as much by her family's as her own aim. As a girl from a small rural village she was educated by her landowning family, who moved her and her brother into a neighboring "big city," rented a "house, servants, and everything," and hired a teacher to teach her and her brother in the house, with the intent for them to come back to the native village school to pass SLC, and then for her to go on to further education to become a doctor. What she had gained from her own "feeling" and "experience" was to lead her further astray:

> I thought I will not join ISc, I will do *something*, um, Social Service, something....I got SLC pass and then in '62 there was a rural development, village development program [launched] by the government....through the American aid, and through the Indian aid....When I got that information...that they are *recruiting* boys and girls for...work in the village....quietly I just join. I didn't inform my parents because they send me [to Kathmandu] to study in science education [with] the aim to make me a doctor, a medical doctor. But I change my aim. (life-history interview, 19 February 1993)

The path she took after six months training, after SLC, was government service (in the daytime), as an education officer, and further education at a regional campus of Tribhuvan University (in the early morning):

> I was not a regular student because I have to...spend my time in the village with the rural people....And 4 years I work there. And in each village, uh *panchayat*, at that time, *panchayat* democracy in our country....I open one primary school. Every time, when I will go to visit in the rural area...I collect the people and I ask them to open a school and to send daughters. And I was the example, you see? And it was very easy to convince them, I got SLC pass and now I got a job, very respectable job....And I got position...I can work. So if you...educate your daughters they will, they can do, like me! (life-history interview, 19 February 1993)

Neelam Basnet opened up 1800 primary schools in those first four years: "The time was also [influential] because...all over the world, the change has been coming" (life-history interview, 19 February 1993). She was given a promotion, called into the Ministry of Education, and sent to Israel for further training; and upon her return, she was called on to facilitate and to plan how many teachers should be trained: Her story is the epic struggle which culminated in one female teacher having to be placed in every primary school:

> Because no system was...encouraging to educate them....I was...for the promotion of female education. So I always...ask...District Education Officer if you will send the female....she will get more facility....for the districts.
>
> And one secretary...in the Ministry, he was very supportive...because he also thinks we *have* to promote female education....so he gave me... power.... Well, he [was] born in a terai village and he....told me so many times....His wife was not educated, he was very...educated and he always see the torture of the females in the village, you know? They are getting so much trouble and they are working so much, and...even [the family also] they don't dare to protect them....*That was something his feeling*. So he was very supportive...for the promotion of girls' education.
>
> And then there was a project from the UNICEF....I gave the quota for East districts: that much girls should be recruited for female education, for female teachers...at the primary level....especially I...asked them, "you select...girls from the rural community....because the urban girls they are not going back to the village."...Very few girls were recruited, anyway we start...training them....We gave...scholarship and everything through UNICEF....
>
> I was....educational planning officer, and...I start to train female teachers....In 1980, again the [UNICEF] project was revised....We found very fruitful that project...because girls, they are getting some facility and the poor parents are motivated to send their daughters....for teacher training.....They couldn't afford their daughters' education....
>
> Our cultural bias was...to educate the son because in future the son will take care of them and the daughters will get married and they will go in another house....they think the girls...have to learn...in the house to be a housewife....how to take care [of the] child, how to cook, and how to manage the house. They had such type of feeling and they don't like to invest their money for their daughters....that was their problem....

I start to visit…district to district.…Then we create a special unit [for] female education throughout the nation.…I, myself, try to recruit the girls.…

People are…motivated…"if government is going to give money," to train them, "to educate her, okay, I am now ready." *That way the people turn.* Then the first program was to train females from the rural area and…we have, at that time…four campuses, Pokhara, Dhankuta, and Nepalgunj, and another one, I opened in Jumla.…it was very remote area.…and the girls they can't adjust climatically.…it was the first program and then we thought it is not…enough…and then we design another program also. Because at that time…for primary school teacher the qualification was SLC…it was determined that way. But it was very difficult to find a girl from village who had got SLC.…We couldn't find in the rural area, so we decided to start…"feeder program." We open so many feeder hostels.…in different districts and we gave the scholarship and we recruit…the girls who are very deprived, who are very backward community, and who are very interested for…education.

There was so many criteria.…and we recruit on the basis of that criteria and we brought them in the district headquarters, we put them in the hostel and we manage everything. There was a hostel superintendent and cooking and…wash man, everything. And in the morning and evening they have extra coaching class.…because they couldn't adjust in the school.…up to SLC.…

And another one program we designed.…I want to promote *that* community who are socially and economically, they are very deprived.…I always prefer to recruit that community who sweep us, you know?.…

It was very hectic time for me, every time I have to rush in the village and just to go and recruit…one day here and next day another district.…

I thought I must now…integrate the literacy program also.…Father is easy to convince.…But mother.…

And then I thought…let's integrate our literacy program also for the women, and then another program we integrate, that was in the formal education sector, we have designed…female teacher training, then upgrading program for girls, and then scholarship program for secondary education…and then another primary school scholarship and so.…Even the education was free but they have to buy…exercise book and.…uniform also.…*not* uniforms…we feel when parents are ready to send their daughters but they don't have enough even.…just a simple dress.…which…I thought [will] motivate them.…and the parents also: "At least she will get, if she will go to school, two pairs of dress, she …will get, I will not have to spend for her clothes," that way they are motivated. And then another one program I designed…if…some school is going to recruit, or assign, or appoint female teacher the school will get some other facility also.…

And it was very difficult and…most of the time I discuss with my colleagues, and with my boss, we must make…compulsory for female…once they will get training, automatically she should get appointment, that was my argument. But it was some problem in the education…policy. And then…my struggle…this national…education committee.…the female should get preference.…SLC should be the minimum qualification for primary school teacher.…

Mostly the districts…they just told [us in the government] "that girl [does not want] to go from her home in that school, it is very far"…there

> are so many clues, you know, [it was all] just to avoid them. (life-history interview, 19 February 1993)

'So, what do you know?'

M. Kazim Bacchus asked me: "So, what do you know?" (personal communication, 5 October 1994). That is, if a lending bank or a development agency was to say, "here is all this money, now tell us about what you have learned from listening to women's teaching tales about how we can improve the situation for future and practising women teachers in Nepal."

Nepalese women teachers' stories suggest a realm of an educated elite who know there are further challenges to be faced. Turning females from illiterate to literate means more than just changing women and girls themselves: it also means changing the *sans* connection, analysis, narrative, or moral environments encountered in educative control situations, in homes, schools, colleges, universities, and, most importantly, in teacher training to a caring and a "literate" one in which we can *also* read women and girls' lives and the significance of connection, analysis, narrative, *and* moral dimensions in *our* questions (see also Kelly, 1989).

'When a door is closed, a window will open'

D. Jean Clandinin passed the words of this section title on to me as I came to close the final chapter of my graduate student identity, this intellectual rite of passage to teaching and speaking out. In predominantly male, mythic, epic quests, which help to show the right way to be by drawing examples from those who return from exile to reunite the human family, the pattern is of *rite de passage* (separation), *limen* (threshold-to-be-passed-over), and reconciliation (turning-point), the life-enhancing taking of turns (return).

At first, I did not have any ideas about what she meant until I began to write/talk/wonder/improvise (Clandinin et al., 1993b). Small doors have been closed on my journey, and a big one is about to be shut as I prepare to face the academic community who will, so to speak, hand me the keys to drive to some new home. To face closed doors, I always need at least one window/curtain of possibility open. And one of my favorite images to peer through is an open-curtained kitchen window as I survey the scene, not counting, just seeing feelingly the "prickly" (fir) trees, as my toddler son and his friends call them.

I am a product of oral (traditional/homogeneous/communal) and literary (print-oriented/overbureaucratised/fragmented/individualistic/alienated) social relations.[17] I live in a small-town setting—a large compound of family student housing—in a city, my life-style is similar to the middle-class of the surrounding neighborhoods, without many of the materialistic trappings. I do not own a home, a car, but I own a television/computer/bike. We live beside the university farm, and I for one still have rural connections. I owe my creative "independence" as much to my maternal grandmother as to my own rebelliousness and to education, to "effective access…to multiple cultures," which provide "levels of perception that are often not available to mono-cultural writers" (Subramani, 1985).

I have powerful daydreams. I recount one I had one day while sitting in a chair for a haircut at a local beauty school, surrounded by young girls becoming hairdressers. The shadow that was cast by the sunlight, underneath the shelf holding the bottles of hair gel/hair spray/antiseptic, reflected for me a view to the sea. A curtain was blowing in a light wind. I stared and stared. How could it be that in this place light years removed from the world of the university, and from any sea, here I am yearning for the fluid continuity of uninterrupted study? For a moment in time I have become again a child-like observer of young women combing out strand after strand, I, too, wish I could comb the hair of silver-haired women, like my long-gone grandmother, a reversal of an image in Sharon Olds' (1984) poem:

> Brushing out my daughter's dark
> silken hair before the mirror
> I see the grey gleaming on my head,
> the silver-haired servant behind her. Why is it
> just as we begin to go
> they begin to arrive, the fold in my neck
> clarifying as the fine bones of her
> hips sharpen? As my skin shows
> its dry pitting, she opens like a small
> pale flower on the tip of a cactus;
> as my last chances to bear a child
> are falling through my body, the duds among them,
> her full purse of eggs, round and

firm as hard-boiled yolks, is about
to snap its clasp. I brush her tangled
fragrant hair at bedtime. It's an old
story—the oldest we have on our planet—
the story of replacement.

All that is going on is some form of exchange. Bateson (1989) writes how

> constancy is an illusion. After all, our ancestors were immigrants, many of them moving on every few years: Today we are migrants in time. Unless teachers can hold up a model of lifelong learning and adaptation, graduates are likely to find themselves trapped into obsolescence as the world changes around them. (p. 14; see also Hogan et al., 1993, p. 206)

I consistently want to explore the whole generative and imaginative scope of narrative inquiry. I want to understand cooperative, adaptive environments from the perspective of the prolific life in such places, where women and girls, women and nature come together as intriguing to me as the intertidal—grinding sand, the green sea anemone that had grabbed hold of a garter snake, here, trying to swallow a blenny and ignoring its own predicament, while being eaten by the anemone—as the white mud river valley—the elegant silver-striped black garter snake my son and I ran across in Edmonton that turned and hissed at us, paying my respect in close attention to nature and death. Sometimes imagining the scene from-above, as if atop a rocky outcrop overlooking the whole, the scene as a system of value, what is that binds such diversity of form together? It is imagination. I take such inspiration from Audrey Thomas' (1984) novel, *Intertidal life*, which I read so many years before and from a picture taken of an extravagantly ordered image: In the 1994 September/October issue of *Equinox*, Bristol Foster muses over a photo taken while wandering the wild western coast of Vancouver Island. "The story points out that many predators will try to kill anything that moves and is the right size.…At the top of the food pyramid, it does not pay to be picky" (p. 14). It appears that this need to eat everything in sight is known to those at the top of academic/development pyramid/complex (e.g., The World Bank). Leach (1994) retells the theme in her imaginative review of such perspective,

> there is no need to [be picky, that is, to] examine the structures and processes—legal, social, cultural, economic and political—that sustain gender inequality, yet it is in these same structures and processes that the

> real answer lies as to why parents fail to see that education is important for girls. (p. 219; see especially the World Bank publication that King & Hill [1993] have written from an economist's perspective)[18]

The open window is a view to issues of educational policy, curriculum and practice. The young women village teachers in Nepal with nonformal basic educations who are completing the *Cheli Beti* programme (who provide classes exclusively for out-of-school young girls aged 8 to 14 years) are noted in National Planning Commission, HMG-N/UNICEF (1992) as making a space for "local women [to] gather around to cheer on their daughters" (p. 149). As a result, a bond between community and the teachers themselves is beginning to be forged: "The teachers become strong characters, not just aware of new teaching methods, but of their own role in the community as educated women" (National Planning Commission, HMG-N/UNICEF, 1992, p. 149). National Planning Commission, HMG-N/UNICEF (1992) makes the point that "the thinking and discussion that takes places in the *Cheli Beti* classes is not really welcomed in the primary school classroom" (p. 149; excerpted from an article contributed by Ms. Anna Robinson, Deputy Director, VSO Nepal). Wherever it is said, "*Mother, I do not know you. Mother, I never knew you*," one response may be what it means "to daughter," is to know yourself in a mother's line: "*Daughter—you knew yourself. Without knowing, you knew me*" (Olsen's mother-daughter lesson in poetics, 1989, p. 14). Doris Lessing (1954/1970) reminds us through Martha in *Martha Quest* how it feels to lack a female "role model for a positive self-image" (Christ, 1980). Women's teaching stories/tales are necessary to assist "the interior movement of the human mind" (Lessing, 1972; see Casey, 1990).

Being part of the brave few created a feeling of being alone. Neelam Basnet suggests that this feeling of being all alone occurs at many levels in the educational activities of Nepal, although, in her case, it did not manage to discourage her life's work and purpose:

> And I was just alone, and everything was on my shoulders, anyway, though I am not expert,[19] I have better experience, you know…in different problems…with my boss I have to struggle, and when I go in the village I have to struggle with them and I have to convince them. And I have travelled all over the country. And then…I was telling you…I start

> that...Cheli Beti program, and then I recruit...female teacher, and then I collect the experts also for revising the material [to be used] in Cheli Beti program....I called the Seti project expert also, and other expert [from] CERID, and others I collect, and I ask them [to revise] the material, I got money from UNICEF....And then we revise the material, also, and we change the qualifications also and...just ten...twelve days training I give them through the experts, and then all over the country I spread this Cheli Beti program and adult education. (life-history interview, 19 February 1993)

A Nepalese woman student teacher made note of how "there are many community services I would like to use, but do not know how to get into contact with them. I had a desire to conduct adult literacy program for women but could not do due to women's weakness." A second suggested, "I desire to run the adult literacy class but I could not get it." While one woman student teacher also "wanted to give first-aid treatment to the villagers but could not do because I did not know how to contact. I prefer to teach the illiterate but that does not exist in the community," another noted, "I want to serve the helpless, poor and illiterate people. If there would have been any such organization that would have been better. But there is no such service in our community." The difficulty for women and girls in Nepal of finding an open window and living in an interpretive community is stressed.

Hard teachings

Neelam Basnet provides a telling example, a maternal teaching tale/story, of the "struggle to resist the temptation to abandon, struggle to stay in the fight and on the scene, a goal almost the opposite of…'safe' independence" (Ruddick, 1989/1990, p. 181):

> *Neelam:* In Ministry of Education, well, um very few boss who likes me [I laugh] because…I never became…yes man. I didn't say always yes, if he is not correct…though he is my boss…I respect him, he is my boss, but I am not compelled to do what he says only just to obey his idea. So…it took long time, you know, just to get that thing [one woman teacher in every primary school, and for this Neelam engaged in 7 years of *ahimsa*, nonviolent leadership][20]
>
> *Linda:* But would you say that, you've seen a lot of changes,
>
> *Neelam:* Mm Hmm [affirmative]
>
> *Linda:* and you've travelled a lot, do you feel hopeful about the situation for women teachers?
>
> *Neelam:* Well yeah, I hope so, the situation will be changed because you know…the band will come from the people
>
> *Linda:* Yes
>
> *Neelam:* not from the Ministry of Education. It was the situation once. The Ministry of Education was going and praying "please send your daughters." Now the situation has been turned…"they are demanding," okay, it will come.
>
> *Linda:* They are demanding?
>
> *Neelam:* Uh, they are demanding now. Not…the situation when I was…going and I was praying them.…"Please, [in Nepali], in the village panchayat, you please send your daughter, I will give scholarship, and I will give.…*I will*, I will take care…daughters, there is a woman who can look after your women…your daughter will be under my guarantee," I told like that.…Then they will uh [groaning slowly] agree. Then after 10 years, and uh they used to come in my office and they were saying "okay madam please give one scholarship for my daughter and I will send," that was change!…So I am hopeful, if government is also giving some program and they are doing this literacy program in *enough* way.…the change, the attitude will change, and the people will start to demand, but still we have to do a lot! (life-history interview, 19 February, 1993)

Neelam Basnet's maternal practice includes many revealing moments of "conflict resolution through mutual concessions" (Ruddick, 1989/1990). But as Ruddick (1989/1990) explains,

> these are only moments in an ongoing practice of peacemaking that is radically different. Peace is not a precarious equilibrium in which everyone is somewhat warily left alone—though this certainly describes many "peaceful" respites in maternal life. (p. 180)

Ruddick (1989/1990) says that "battles provoke and are provoked by fear and rage, lust, greed, jealousy, shame and guilt, and certainly by love and guilt," and "peace, like the maternal life that it blesses, includes ambivalences and compromise. Many mothers go through long nights of disappointments, distrust, hurt, and rage. Although temporary distances between children and mothers," who are not equal, who are not *coeval* (having the same age, existing at the same epoch—O.E.D.), "are useful for both, mothers tend not to exit, but to speak, even where speech is a quarrel" (pp. 180-1; emphasis added).

This is important for the young women who are becoming teachers in Nepal, as elsewhere, to understand and to reflect upon because those safe and compassionate spaces built and thought by women must be sustained in many difficult contexts. The young women who are becoming teachers in Nepal have suggested that "independence" is one of their main aims in becoming teachers as well as working toward increasing the participation of girls and women in the educational activities of Nepal. As Ruddick (1989/1990) explains, "the peacemaker asks of herself and those she cares for not what they can afford to give up, but what they can give, not how they can be left alone, but what they can do together" (p. 181). In Nepal, "those children currently in school are likely to be *exposed* to the current structures and materials for some time to come" (Joshi & Anderson, 1994; emphasis added).

Nepalese women being and becoming teachers' tonal quality, in terms of voice, dramatic mimesis, reversal of pattern design, mockery, lament and laughter, and the choral nature of their words resonated and rhymed with notions I had already been told and held about getting hardly any sustenance for special or every day occasions, families and nations who disown, displace, or attempt to disposition their educated and quarrelsome, different daughters, teachers who beat or hold back adequate sustenance for daily life, for the creation of vivid energies for creating life, for my mother and her mother when pregnant or not, and for their children during a relentless, seemingly unending fascist regime extended in Canada: Getting nothing was usual but sometimes a single orange for Christmas, and for one of my mother's birthdays she remembered having one egg cooked any way she liked. I remembered again my mother being so hungry that she stole an apple off a farmer's apple tree and he ran after her with a stick in the Old World; now I can understand a little better why my grandmother even in the New World of Calgary, Alberta, ran after the neighbor children when she saw them stealing her sorry old and sour/wild crab-apples. She was a crack shot with her broom. And how she laughed and laughed and I just stood there staring at this old woman, wondering why is she laughing?

These stories from these women, these hard teachings, were to teach me more about life, about what it takes to sustain life in hard times. As a daughter of a mother who sees tragedy around every bend in the path, I worked hard as a professional actress and a teacher of the expressive arts to gain a fuller understanding of the alternative elements of the play in story; hence, I stress the need for taking turns, comedic turns. My grandmother—and my mother said "she was not funny"—spun stories from (straw) tragedy to (gold) tragi-comedy in Canada for a purpose to make me laugh and laugh (so that I might live and let others live).[21] I inherited my grandmother's crack shot sense of humor/energy, inner reserves, and fought my mother's gentle, yet dour—"I am a victim"—kind.

Ruddick (1989/1990) suggests the story we are being told by mothers, feminists, and women-in-resistance is that "many politics are needed, many wills, many moral and intellectual inventions." My/our struggle is

> to find unclichéd words that are not dead and thoughts that do not crudely bludgeon reader or hearer into a still worse insensibility. "For," as Wordsworth wrote, "the human mind is capable of being excited without the application of gross and violent stimulants." In his or her very effort to find words to express "the essential passions of the heart", the poet is still—in the 1990s as in the 1790s—"the rock of defence of human nature; an upholder and preserver". (Oldfield, 1989, p. 192)

Subramani (1985) points out that "clichés and stereotypes are reductive devices. They help to simplify the world. It requires courage and a wider compassion to accept the world in its complexity," to see, to hear that "there are sympathisers too, perhaps less well heard than the detractors," and that "two tasks, of breaking down the cultural labels and searching for the regenerative principles in art," which require awakening the inner eye and inner ear, "are inter-linked" (pp. 87, 91; see also Eisner, 1991, 1993; Noddings & Shore, 1984).

Is this a shared story?

According to Subramani (1985), "the writer needs a role, a social function, but in contemporary culture [she] is a relatively free agent who is not assigned any role" (p. 10). I wondered what happens when we substitute the word *teacher* for the word *writer*:

> Alongside the search for a social function is the [teacher's] own need to work towards an unimpeded realisation of [her] potential [which] implies freedom and openness to experience, which could, in the end, pave the way for totally new ways of being, and these could work in direct opposition to the mores of local cultures. (Subramani, 1985, p. 10)

It seems there is always a whole cast of persons in the background who are eager to help but who keep doing things in the same old way, who have remained forgetful of the possibility of place and of being themselves. Chitrakar (1995) suggests in his doctoral dissertation with regard to distance education in Nepal that there is much more to be learned "by learning from the participants who they are and what it is like for them to be in their places."

To cut through myths of paradise or the notion of epic grandeur, Virginia Woolf (1938/1977), writing "from the fascist thirties," points out how "the public and the private worlds are inseparably connected; the tyrannies and servilities of the one are the tyrannies and servilities of the other" (Ruddick, 1989/1990, p. 247). Insofar as we aspire to believe that the whole world is kin, Christa Wolf (1984) suggests further, "do not let your own people deceive you." In Nepal, the taken-for-granted not seeing of the women who are and who are becoming teachers, who feel themselves linked to the *past* which still lives among them, which they need to know and how to settle their accounts with, is "one of the elements of the *present* and one of the premisses of the *future*" (Gramsci, 1971/1980; see also Casey, 1993).

'I that type of character'

I have begun to view myself as a woman whose strength comes from solitude, from my rooting in nature and from extending my family's stories, "from confronting the darkness within and without and then coming through the other side" (Christ, 1980). "No one is ever completely ready," but "there is something waiting for us at the edge of the woods, and it is our fate to meet it" (Estés, 1992, p. 84). *Guru-lekhika* provides her own story of a mother, a different daughter, a teacher, an author and her relationship with an audience in Nepal:

> Uh, uh, but uh I don't know how to approach, because you know you'll be surprised to see, know my character, because I never go and approach the people, I never go and approach the people. Here, everybody wants to go and approach the people and other things, no? But I am always like this, I just, I write and uh you can say I never go and join this…crowd, you know? Then once…I was awarded…for…my writings.…
>
> I went to the Royal Academy, at that time, I asked the people.…They didn't know me, they couldn't recognize *me*, you know? Most of them…had not *seen* me. So they said, "you go, that side".…
>
> There was written, "[*Guru-lekhika*'s name] Welcome".…
>
> They were waiting for *me*, but I didn't know this, they didn't say it.…So I went inside and the Minister came. And I was waiting there and uh later on, somebody came and she recognized me and she said, "oh you are [*Guru-lekhika*] you go and sit on the front seat."
>
> But I was very shy, you know, to go *there*.…I told one girl to sit there, she was very young and very frightened girl, and I told her to sit there and went backside, and [another] lady went…and she told other people that [*Guru-lekhika* has] already come and she is sitting frontside, *front* row, and the people came and they [thought the very young and very frightened girl was *Guru-lekhika* and so] they put the garland on her then, later on, somebody said, *"No, no, [Guru-lekhika] is sitting backside!"* I that type of character. (life-history interview, 29 April 1993)

One Nepalese woman student teacher picks up on a similar thread in emphasizing that "*there are many community services…but I don't know how to approach them.*" Even in this doctoral dissertation, nameless characters upset the illusion of reality, point to an allegorical significance, demand a human form that fits with the quest for an authentic existence.

Neelam Basnet changed herself in many ways, just as she changed the possibilities for other women and girls:

> I myself I changed in so many way…I play a very active role in different way. I was a teacher, I was a school inspector, I was a counsellor, I was…in the training institute, I was a registrar who can look after all the records, and how many…are under our training….and then I became…education planner, especially in the teacher training, in the Ministry of Education, and then I became…project Chief in the Women's Education….Then I went…abroad…for…further training in teacher training….as [an] observer, as a trainer, as a…participant…I attend the World Education conference in Bangkok….I start to train females [to be] teachers. (life-history interview, 19 February 1993)

The flexibility she gained for authoring, adapting to social change, and facing her audience was in terms of "learn something," and then return home. In Neelam Basnet's case, she has at various intervals returned to a feeling gained at age "10/12," when her mother died, and it enabled her to "do *something*" (life-history interview, 19 February 1993).

The context of naming through metaphors emerged, not only from the women I encountered in Nepal, but from my own journey to understanding through different voices/roles I took on to hear these teachers. If "language is a site of political activity," I would argue that all the metaphors and, particularly, for me, the metaphor of teacher-as-different-daughter, and the metaphor of teacher-as-mother which emerged in Casey's (1993) work

> takes on enormous *political* significance….The discursive contribution of ordinary teachers working for social change cannot be dismissed as merely individual or simply subject, for these women theorize in active and reciprocal relationships, as members of an interpretive community, and as part of a living tradition. Of course, "a new symbolic mode is not *all* we need"….But the particular understandings of the world which these women express in their discourses have been conceived in political practice. (p. 165; Newton & Rosenfelt, 1985)

One might say that out of the experience of meeting metaphorical and literal, epic terrain in Nepal and in Canada has emerged the *dramatis personae* and, for me, the dramatic monologue, poetry, the short story, and a future form, the novel, and task, which is to intensify the audience's participation. I asked Nepalese women future and practising teachers "What do you want to be doing *five* years after graduation from teacher training?" Two Nepalese future women teachers wrote "educational research," and a third noted that she wanted to "be a teacher and to do research on teaching." This Nepalese woman student teacher was more explicit:

> I like to teach about the environment, social situation, living style etc.; After two years I would see whether the above mentioned have fulfilled or not and if it has changed I will think about the others; After 5 years I would see the consequences and could decide whether I succeeded or failed.

One Nepalese woman student teacher suggested, "I will be writing a novel and other literatures," another noted that she wants "to write novels and literary articles," and a third wrote that she wished to "share my experience fully." This Nepalese woman student teacher wrote that ""I will try to make my village fully literate." In a similar line, another said she would like to continue to "teach the poor and the illiterates free of cost." Caute (1971) captures the contradictions between the desire to affect the consciousness of a people and enforced isolation by alienating styles of education and the requirements of writing:

> Between the creative writer and the classes or causes [she] wishes to "represent or "express" *there is always a gap*: the gap between the book and the world, between my pen at this moment and the miner's drill at this moment, the gap between a superfluous, middle class game (literature) and those forms of necessary, concrete activity by which we stay alive. This gap brings a renewed anguish to the intellectuals generation after generation; and generation after generation the impulse to "go to the people"...is renewed. This impulse is both noble and futile. (p. 63)

This gap between what we see among and for ourselves and what we choose to tell in an integrated public discourse is also remarkably complex. Future and practising women teachers in Nepal, as elsewhere, have epic inner lives. The artist and teacher, in Nepal, *Guru-lekhika* returns to the notion of a concept akin to Sartre's Nothingness, the Void, without feeling secure because she has seen the life of her mother: "I don't feel security....now I am earning, now I am doing so, I am getting everything, I think, I may lose, yes, if its some money or love" (life-history interview, 29 April 1993). To sustain her, a notion gives rise to the novel form: She is now considering writing a novel and, according to Subramani (1985), in artistic terms, "the pattern is complete....the primary consciousness born out of an integrated epic world is shattered at the start of [the] artistic quest" (p. 123). *Guru-lekhika* and I inspired each other, as a mother to a daughter, to keep on trying to write a novel. Theories of process and change in the West have been developed apart from a daughter and a mother's connecting story; symbolism and mythology renders women's connections invisible and/or ambivalent to serve as a continuing source of power/identity. Theoretical distance between mothers and daughters is not surprising given that most Western educational models continue to unfold within traditions (e.g., Piaget, Freud, and so forth) that are "radically dualistic" (Martin, 1994). As a surrogate mother, in the improvisatory art of living (Bateson, 1989), *Guru-lekhika* has communicated to me her compelling force and, in collective terms, an "*angst* [which] is far from a *condition humaine*" (Subramani, 1985). *Guru-lekhika* uses drama as a metaphor to underscore the frustrated potential a woman has of acting and of having a life, in Nepal, relatively independent of any rigid allegorical patterning: Her mother

> started drinking....out of frustration....She, her *whole life*, she was not happy. She didn't get happiness at all. So she had to suffer a lot and...three years back, she came here and she was with me for six months and...last year she died....Yes. Now I don't have parents. *I don't have parents, I don't have brother.* (life-history interview, 29 April 1993)

Here, her quick telling, and the women teachers I encountered in Nepal tell stories quickly with regard for "fixed time," has a rhetorical flair and a feeling of outrage at what happens to female artisans who support the chiefly caste, who are their patrons. Didacticism does not have the same perjorative meaning it carries for the modern critic as it does for the oral poet. Beyond upholding the dominant patriarchal culture's religious and political ideals, beyond numbed states, beyond the absurdity of families in Nepal where women and children are living as peasants/serfs, which as a complex of forces lives in the present and projects into the future, *Guru-lekhika* weaves herself into the tale as the inner voice of the central character, and recognizes in her own life that absurdity is not the final meaning, there is transcendence in creating history out of absurdity, out of alienation, a recovery of joy, in teaching:

> It is very difficult for me to say which one is my favorite. All of my, most of my stories I write about the people in middle class families, and about the women because I have seen...how they have to face the difficulties in their life, so I have written about *them* and their lives....I have written a story about one woman...she was compelled to marry, because of her children, you know. She was not educated....
>
> And actually she had the potential of acting and all. And she used to go to the theatre and act in...Nepal Royal Academy....People used to call her

> for acting but they…never respect her, you know? And uh one day she came there [to the Royal Academy], she acted at that time and she was crying, then uh and one lady, myself, I ask her "why are you crying?" And she said, "Today, you know, my son…died and I have…come for acting, for the money only." At that time her husband comes at the door and he kicks her and beats her and he snares the money. She was awarded the money and the certificate, you know. And he kicks her and snares that money and leaves her there. And she just uh drops the certificate there on the door of the Royal Academy….And she just goes. That means I wanted to show them that it is *nothing*. This reward and other things are *nothing* unless you just uh think for the welfare of the women in *Nepal*….
>
> I wanted to say these things through my story….Actually I wanted to be a *singer* or act in a *drama*, you know, but uh I have become a teacher…I enjoy it….Because the children, they like to dance, they like to act, they like to sing, and through this also we can give education to them….in the class I sing and I make them sing, I teach them songs. (life-history interview, 29 April 1993)

Guru-lekhika teaches within oral and literary forms, song and tale, two essential forms, which are also in a transitional state. Unwilling to accept political labels, she nevertheless works for social change; she teaches her students "how to read and write and makes them aware of the importance of education," as is the desire of this Nepalese woman student teacher. *Guru-lekhika* and I share the impulse to write as if nothing has ever been written before. *Guru-lekhika* sees the past slipping further away in terms of critically extending the understanding of younger women coming forward today. From the *Ramayana*, and "everyone loves a hero/ an image to create" (indigo girls, ["left me a fool"], 1991, track 6):

> The hero took it from her hand and threw
> His own fine robe upon the ground, and drew
> The rough bark mantle on. So Lakshman braced,
> His dress removed, the bark around his waist.
>
> But modest Sita, in her silks arrayed,
> Eyed the strange mantle trembling and afraid:
> As from Kaikeyi's hand the coat she took,
> She viewed it with a startled wondering look,
> As, in the brake beside the stream, a deer
> Looks at the hunter's snare with doubt and fear.
>
> With weeping eyes, like a poor bleating lamb
> That runs with trembling feet to find its dam,
> She nestled closely to her Rama's side,
> And in her soft low faltering accents cried:

> "Tell me how hermits, dwelling in the wood,
> Tie their bark mantles on." Perplext she stood,
> Shrinking in modest dread, while one small hand
> Strove at the neck to join the rugged band. (Griffith, in Gowen,
> 1931/1968, p. 240)

Towards a transcendent service

In Nepal, many may have accepted the order they were born in only superficially: many of the "more than 30-35 ethnic groups spread around the Himalayan mountains and even in the plains," speaking "several languages—at least three or four major languages and more than 50 dialects" accepted the caste system only superficially; however, "in practical terms they were integrated into the Hindu order sanctioned by the rulers. Hinduism stated that every individual was born into the caste which he or she deserved" (Raeper & Hoftun, 1992, p. 95). A post-patriarchal sense of not labelling the transcendent service of those who do the work of caring and educating and in terms of women as teachers to the people of Nepal is expressed best by two women teachers who also suggest as Wendt (1976) expressed with regard "to a Pacific Way, there is much racial discrimination between our many ethnic groups, and much heartless exploitation of one group by another" (p. 53). Fiorenza (1984) in

> synthesizing much recent scholarship on women.... hypothesizes that religion has often functioned for women as a "middle zone," between public and private, wherein cults, sects and (more recently) voluntary organizations were often subversive of the patriarchal household and state and thus often served emancipatory functions for women. (in Flemming, 1980, p. 49)

It is in this middle zone, which she has written on the life-history questionnaire as Hindu, that *Guru-heart* finds fault, finds (Gurung, Nepali) culture and tradition most blatantly ignored:

> I don't know much about religion actually, and I'm not very much interested (laugh) in religion, and I don't *care* about it much, you know, uh, I don't mind going to the church here or there.... How people is treated is what matters, that's how I'm satisfied, but [in Nepal] I'm not. (life-history interview, 11 May 1993)

While there is keener awareness of the image-making function of art and religion in the more mature authors, *Guru-lekhika* also responds in a similar way to my question about her religion even as she has written her religion as Hindu on the life-history questionnaire. She brings up the point that the real world of Nepal is trapped in various stereotypes and clichés:

> I am not Christian, I am Hindu....No, it doesn't make any difference. And another thing, I believe in Christianity also, because uh, you can ask, uh, I'm not, uh, before in Nepal, before Christians were not allowed, you know? The Christianity, this religion, they couldn't talk about this, and all. At that time, also, I used to talk frankly and straightforwardly to the people....look, what I am telling, if you don't want to eat *daal* and *bhaat*, you know, nobody is going to force you to eat *daal* and *bhaat*, you know? For the eating also, for the drinking also, for the sleeping also, you do according to your *wish*. Then to change the religion is very *big* thing. (life-history interview, 29 April 1993)[22]

Like the support which *Guru-aamaa* has received from her Christian sponsor-mother, and correspondent move to name herself as Christian, *Guru-lekhika's* perspective is a personal and professional response working as she is in a school which has received support from missionary work in Nepal and abroad and is affirmation that an antagonistic response toward missionaries is not universal.

Raeper and Hoftun (1992) are helpful to position *Guru-aamaa's, Guru-lekhika's, and Guru-heart's* intimate and individual exile and yearning into a societal view of how subtle forms of antagonism among the various ethnic groups are yet to be given adequate expression:

> The political change which swept through Nepal during the spring of 1990 did not only lead to a partial breakdown in law and order and to social unrest. The pro-Democracy movement actually released another, potentially stronger movement which threatened the very fabric of Nepali society. This second movement took the form of a religious and ethnic revolt.
>
> The six-month period between the end of the revolution in May 1990 and the promulgation of the new constitution on 11 November brought the issues of language, religion and ethnic conflict to public attention....
>
> It certainly became clear that Nepal with its thirty ethnic...groups and almost a hundred different languages might not remain satisfied with one national language, Nepali, and one national religion, Hinduism....
>
> Minority religious groups such as Christians and Muslims suddenly became visible in public life. More importantly, Buddhists made themselves felt as a political force for the first time....The appearance of religious conflict worried orthodox Hindus who were influenced by the spread of Hindu fundamentalism in India. (pp. 154-6)

Chandralekha a Hindu woman activist, in India, suggests as women "we have to use our eyes and ears and *see* the creative energies in us....Personally, I believe this energy is directly related to the Shakti cults" (in Dubey, 1983, p. 272), a concept, which, alongside the caste system, goes back thousand of years in time. "Despite brahmin supremacy, the matriarchal and populist cultures...make their opposition felt" (Liddle & Joshi, 1986/1989). Nepalese women future and practising teachers suggest as well no genuine or memorable indigenous female characters in religion and/or literature whom they draw on for role models, that is, for alternative perspectives and possibilities, hence, they draw on what they see, feel, and hear and, hence, on their own creative energies.

'A model of future practice': These are not utopian schemes

"Increasingly we are recapturing the current and historical record of what it has meant for teachers to be women," and the meaning of the metaphors created by women teachers in their everyday/everynight lives are part of these stories, "part of the whole social web to which these women belong and within which they have worked. For us, they can only offer models of possibility" (Casey, 1988, pp. 48, 222). These are not utopian schemes: Women who are and who are becoming teachers in Nepal also stress "the need to preserve the traditional collaborative spirit in the face of incipient individualism" (Subramani, 1985). Singling out women's work as nurses, as teachers, as mothers, and as different daughters we learn "practical, life-sustaining compassion" (Oldfield, 1989; see especially Weil, 1942/1962, 1952, 1977). The extension of these stories as a form of female advocacy, e.g., "the traditionally non-competitive, non-hierarchical and non-acquisitive social work of many women 'Outsiders' [could] be a model of future practice" (Oldfield, 1989, p. 238; Ruddick, 1989/1990).

Democracy, anger, and the politics of personal identity and displacement

I am ten years younger than Sue Middleton (1993), but like her, I also "grew up in a welfare state." But she is a university teacher educator in the 1990s, while I am a graduate student, in some ways more like her daughter, moving into a professional future in times of economic recession and despair, looking to older women as mothers, as teacher educators, who, as she addresses in her book *Educating Feminists: Life Histories and Pedagogy*, are asking in the present economic and political situation what critical pedagogy is "appropriate for the lives and times of today's students?" (Middleton, 1993). Education and development discourse reflects political currents in the world, in the society, as does practice. Education has a relatively high profile for feminism as it does for other social movements "because it holds out hope for change among the young"; yet, in Canada, for example,

> education has also seemed resistant to change, as it is so large, so multi-faceted, so closely tied to the local community, and at the same time protected at the centre from those who would have an impact. (Gaskell, McLaren, & Novogrodsky, 1989, p. 1).

A number of authors whose work cannot always be neatly categorized along the political spectrum (the Right and the Left) are attempting to deal with the problematic of how to "school" the various voices articulating their personal identities in the contemporary political landscape. It is the politics of personal identity, the politics of displacement, that I would like to bring to the educative community's critical attention, in as much as such experience inside and outside "school" makes women in graduate school critical of the texts they have read and may be about to produce as they take up the act of writing about their lives and the lives of others. One provocative female writer warns that "democracy may not be up to the task of satisfying the yearnings it itself unleashes" as "more and more we confront one another as aggrieved groups" (Elshtain, 1993, back cover). Elshtain (1993) has identified "the perils and the promises of democracy in the 1990s" and, specifically, "one version of our current discontents" about the political climate, what she calls "Democracy and the politics of displacement." While some of her relevance may seem to have more to do with the seriously deteriorating democratic "civility" we have seen in the images of American democracy and American schools fed to us by our neighbor from the South, I believe that her voice is one that as a German/Romanian/Canadian "feminist" educator I need not fear. For she says, "the task of the democratic political imagination is possible if civility is not utterly destroyed, if room remains for playful experimentation from deep seriousness of purpose free from totalistic intrusion and ideological control"

(Elshtain, 1993, p. 142). And "even when equality and justice seem far-off ideals, freedom" of playfulness, of experimentation, of theoretical promiscuity "preserves the human discourse necessary to work toward the realization of both" (Elshtain, 1993, p. 142). While she argues that authentic, democratic politics are being displaced as private and personal concerns take over the realm of politics, she also seeks to break down polarities and provoke dialogue with the hope of finding some middle ground.

Unlike Middleton (1993), who describes "techniques whereby we can make visible and problematize our own and others' positionings within the educational, historical, political, institutional, and other social phenomena that are our objects of inquiry" (p. 174), Elshtain (1993) may at times seem interested only in spreading alarm about the tumultuous consequences of such strategies. But her fears are our fears, too. Who has not grown "weary of being accused of bad faith no matter what" they "do, or say, or refrain from doing or saying" (Elshtain, 1993) in the censorious political climate of the 1990s? But for those of us who have been relegated to an "endnote" or a "sidebar" in the dominant discourse, our anger is justifiable, our shouting seen to us as necessary, and so on. I for one can attest that there are some of us who will never again be "shamed" and/or allow others to be "shamed" into silence. We know from personal experience that repression and/or oppression does harm to human beings, and these are the tumultuous consequences of our times that need to be addressed.

'I want to say something through my stories' (*Guru-lekhika*)

The significance of a person's identity is never wholly formed through our principal work, or neatly framed by the gender identity a particular society expects (Ruddick, 1989/1990). Stories of possibility imbued with values of care and connectedness are progressive responses to other "selves." The individual beginnings of a literature written by women in Nepal comes from the educated groups who make up the new emerging, non-governing elites, who contribute "directly to the creation, transmission and criticism of ideas," and who include teachers as "writers, artists, scientists, philosophers, religious thinkers, social theorists, political commentators" (Bottomore, 1966, p. 70).

In this particular teaching tale, the suffering of *Guru-lekhika's* own once aristocratic family through times of tumultuous change in and outside Nepal is silent in a teacher's sympathetic listening to the complexities and uncertainties of another's experience, and intrinsic to her evaluation. It is impossible to capture the richness of listening to her telling, her words must be read aloud to draw the listener back to the rhythm of oral patterns of speech, which I recognize as yearning for "the sane joy of proper communal and relational existence, of genuine friendship and closeness.…*to be a decent person and to study*" (Gross, 1993, p. 264; emphasis added). The protagonist is nameless, perhaps, of no particular country, but what lies beneath the story is an anti-human system, the moral blindness of that which corrupts human contact, and a great deal of private and public history can be extracted from her fiction:

> And another thing in our society there is caste system.…You know? Lower caste and higher caste ….Illegal, yes, yes, yes.…
>
> There was one man, he always used to come to me, but he was a servant of a big man, you know, he was *very rich* man. The master was *very rich*, he still is.…He used to send us some mangoes or something from his…garden…he used to send through that man.…One day he came [and] asked me, that uh "something, do you have, I want to eat, I am very hungry," he said.
>
> Then I asked, "You are working there in that big man's house, you don't have good clothes, and you are hungry. Uh, doesn't he give you anything?" Then *he* told me *his* story…from his uh ancestor, you know…forefather…they were also working in that master's house, the same house, you know.…So they were treated as servant. Huh? And uh they used to give them very little corn and they used to take the work from the whole family, even the boys and girls when they are only five or six years, they had to cut the grass for them, for their cattle, you know?…So the man said that "we don't have house, and uh now we don't have our own house, we don't have any property. It all belongs to our master and I cannot send my children to school."
>
> And all these things, when he told me then [I asked] why? "Because we are lower caste and uh so they treat us like this." So I said that people, the big people or the higher caste, they take the work of the lower caste…but they don't think for the welfare of the people, the poor people. So this is the main cause of our, um, you can say, our country cannot develop, until they get rid of these things. Yes. Yes. (life-history interview, 29 April 1993)

In this story, too, "there is no cause or ideology more precious than life itself," I found, as did Christ (1987), "women's writings [observations and tellings] as sacred texts" (see also Goldenberg, 1979), reminding I and Christ (1980) of the woman's mystery (vision, creativity). I sensed it in my grandmother's home and garden, and I found it again in Neelam Basnet's home and courtyard, and around the Magar teacher's sewing table (when she presented me with a lilac-coloured *salwar* and *kameez* "to remember Nepal," standing in these new clothes for a picture with her in her rose garden at the family's boarding school), and drinking in her story about intentional solitude, again in *Guru-lekhika's* home and out walking and observing with her, as my son played on the old wooden swings, as she supervised the playground of a girls' hostel in Nepal, and having lunch with *Guru-heart* and another teacher who listened intently to a young male Gurung friend I had brought along quietly articulate how he, too, wanted to be a teacher. All these were small steps on the path, a helping hand to yet another awakening, and suggests the need for, and the viability of, an integrated approach, which links all the aspects of women and girls identifying their own priorities and participating at all stages of strategizing. Casey (1993) also discovered that

> Any notion of an ordinary student, a typical teacher, or a generic activist, is definitively dislodged by the distinctive contrasts among these groups of narratives, and by the differences between these women's experiences, interpretations, and practices, and those of children, educators, or militants in other social circumstances. (p. 159)

"I did not like the teachers saying 'you have to study hard' when I was in primary school. At that time I found [it] hard to study but now I realize the importance of education"; how would this migration guide this future woman teacher in Nepal? Is this the voice who would authorize change: "I did not like the teaching all subjects by a single teacher which was monotonous and boring." This woman student teacher had begun to develop a theory about education: "I did not like the teachers saying that they would ask the lesson tomorrow and hit severely if we could not answer. I did not like the education that believes in punishment." Is this the voice of a different daughter who does not like indoctrination: "I did not like recitation in any subjects. I also did not like teaching *Panchayat* as the best political system."

Explore a whole new world of in-betweens

Two unschooled, widowed mothers emerged from the Nepalese women teachers' stories: one may need more and more costly medical attention, and another who suffers loneliness and isolation living apart from her professional children and not being able to read nor write after having raised eleven children. These images are potent reminders of how mothers' suffering and self-sacrifice may be pronounced by daughters going off to school. Neither a mother's health and welfare nor a daughter's civil, political, and social rights are guaranteed in the 1990s as they become increasingly excluded and marginalised. Daughters and mothers tell how increasingly denigrated their economic, political, and social status is in the new system. For *Guru-aamaa* and others, it is the gendered and generational appropriation of labour; in the case of *Guru-lekhika* it is political bullying; and in the case of *Guru-heart,* it is struggles to restory her loss and the loss of a friend, colleague, and rare teacher in an organizational battle during recent restructuring at her school, and the reeling effects of dealing with great bouts of optimism and cynicism. While it became apparent that Nepalese women as teachers, as mothers, and as daughters were accustomed to loss, it must be stated that finally the most tragic losers are the students (girls *and* boys) who, in Nepal, in order "to assume their citizenship role in society," have not yet and may not in upcoming generations receive "an education to help them to accomplish this" (Hossain, 1994; Jones & Wallace, 1992).

As an *initiate*, "one who is beginning a new way, who has come forward to be introduced and instructed" (Estés, 1992), many passages have been scary to me. I also remember my high school drama teacher who was very important to me because he listened to me. This drama teacher seemed like an "Einstein of creativity," he was opening doors, or if doors were closed for some of us, he would show us an open window we might crawl through. He brought in music and live musicians to the classroom, he insisted we listen to every kind of music, everything, for he and we never knew where our inspiration might lie. He brought in National Film Board documentaries and animated short films, he brought in teenage and adult artists to talk about their "art." He asked each of us everyday about what we did everyday, did we listen to the radio, did we go to see theatre, opera, movies, it was so enriching and enlarging it was scary. The kind of listening that went on when we sat in his drama circle was much more active than any listening I had ever encountered with my peers and with an adult before. And one day my drama teacher asked us, "what do you want to do when you grow up?" In my study I have also asked the women teachers, I met in Nepal, "to tell me the story of how you came to be a teacher," and as Casey (1993) suggests, this becomes "an interrogation for social significance": "What is the meaning of your life?" (p. 24).

And I always wanted to answer any and all of my drama teacher's questions with sincerity, because I knew that he was listening: He could tell, he told us, if we were not being ourselves, and I found myself saying, "I want to be an observer."

I have come to believe that a teacher and a teacher-researcher needs to be more than just an observer. I now believe that we need to become what Estés (1992) terms

> an *initiator*...one who commits to the deep work of recounting what they know about the path, who shows the "how-to" and guides the initiate so that she will master the challenges and thereby grow in power. (p. 487n)

My mother, the gardener, the dreamer, still waits for the day when she might live on a land of her own, like a "being let out onto the land/ being born" (Hildebrandt, 1994) this time again, with a fruit orchard, with a beautiful view, has never been able to realize these, her words, in the New World. Instead she walks the suburban landscape everyday, alone, uncelebrated, seemingly insignificant, without admiration of all that she has achieved through her labor. Finding no release from a desire for recognition of the significance of her life, this being of labor labors even now for a place of being, picking up cans, bottles, refuse and broken pieces of glass, even once a used syringe, to make that safer space for someone in schoolyards and shopping mall parking lots, and picks up a few lost coins, which suggest some return. By sacrificing her need for return, a mother may also teach her children the very same sacrifices once they are grown (Estés, 1992). A woman's "return to home allows others growth and development too" (Estés, 1992). "The cries of the suffering world cannot all be answered by a single person [a single group or a single gender] all the time" (Estés, 1992, p. 283). But now that I stand upon an intellectual threshold, I have returned to read my mother's and grandmother's significance, and to preserve space and possibility that is authentic for "family," the blueprint for survival. The female and original blueprint for survival is borne across daughters, mothers, and epic terrain, the "way that the regeneration of a genre comes about—by a transition from one set of possibilities and forms to another" (Éjxenbaum, 1971, p. 236). "In the evolution of a literature," it is necessary at a certain stage

> to create links with and draw support from oral tradition and literature, it is just as important, for the further development of that literature, to outgrow the old conventions and forms.…to strike a variety of poses as a historian, social critic, fabulator, iconoclast and seer. (Subramani, 1985, pp. 113, 115)

I think that is why I was drawn to drama and to writers like Wolf (1984), believing,

> there is no way to bypass the need for personality development, for rational models of the resolution of conflict and thus also for confrontation and cooperation with people of dissident opinions and…people of different sex. (Lecture 3—a Work Diary: 7 May 1981)

As Kagan (1994) writes, "on the road to the kind of critical thinking sought by the best thinkers…to stand within and without the cultures that trained them" (p. 4) is a lesson in the offering, and for those whose lives take such turns, there are no short-cuts to development. In the first line of Dante's *Divina Commedia* [*The divine comedy*], written over six hundred years ago, he recounts epic terrain "in the middle of the journey of…life.…I found myself inside a dark forest, for the right way I had completely lost" (Dante, 1965). It is precisely at this same juncture, when and where it occurs, that to a man, woman, and child, a question must be put, and "a nation must ask…Who are we? Where have we come from?, and Where are we going?" (Sahgal, 1969). Failure to do so, will produce a "bewildered society, people who've lost their moorings and don't know where they're going" (Sahgal, 1969). Having teachers tell their own stories of experience as a vehicle to deepen and develop such an understanding "is a dialogic method…for which pedagogical language" and time and space "is not readily available" (McPhie, 1995; see also Carr, 1986; Schön, 1987).

'I liked my own success'

In Asia-Pacific, as elsewhere, there are noticeable social continuities, not only with respect to images carved in stone or pillar. We can find images concerned with "existence," "being and becoming," and/or "purpose," with accompaniment on journeys to the heavens in engraving and oral poetry, in the shift from the oral to the written form of expression. "Creativity has always had special value" (Chadwick & Chadwick, 1940; Subramani, 1985): for instance, Nepalese people "from a very early period possessed a keen appreciation of the aesthetic" (Brown, 1912). Creativity may well be

> a fixed attribute of every culture. Whether this potential for creativity is realised or not depends on the collaboration of individual talent, history and environment. Even genius can fail in an impoverished society, and many talented individuals have rejected their country because they found the environment deficient. (Subramani, 1985, p. 2)

"Pilgrims in the mountains," in the hill and valley regions of Nepal, "set against rugged cubist configurations" of "rocks and symbolic nature," are traditional images in art and sculpture that evolved in India over a millenium. But unlike Indian sculpture, images of "nameless children" represent "flying celestial beings (*vidyadhara*) in Nepali sculpture…not charismatic youth heroes nor the flying angelic devatas of Indian reliefs, but 'children of god' (*devaputra*) who know how to fly" (Kramrisch, 1964, p. 24; Shaha, 1992, p. 34). A comment by Wendt (1976) on the force of images which also impinge upon the mind of writers in Oceania seems apt: "This is not the stereotyped childlike pagan who needs to be steered to the Light." These symbols have illustrative values and not only for children: growing consciousness is poised between images of confinement and the imaginative flight above.

As one woman wrote in Nepal, "I did not like the attitude of the teachers who did not care about the students' studies and did not care to check their homework"; a second suggested "I liked my own success." This I understood from the moment I made it to elementary school in Canada and so I was told did a young woman student teacher in a primary school in Nepal. Learning to read and write and playing with friends, this we also share in common and my memories of rushing home with homework to teach to my younger brothers came back with a jolt when I read what one student teacher wrote: "I liked homework too!"

What drew this woman student teacher into primary school? "Physical education. Because at that time I was young and I liked to make fun and play." In that regard, there is a fine-drawn line in Nepal between the classes of stories and those who get to learn them: for example, one woman student teacher suggested "moral education was mostly concerned with discipline and physical education was concerned with various games." While for another, it was "undisciplined students and irregularity of classes" that drew her out, e.g., positioned her on another side of that fine line. One student teacher wrote how she was turned from liking primary school because of

> teaching science without doing practical. Also girls were taught other games than volleyball and soccer. *They never gave chance to girls but ended up saying girls don't know how to play these games*. These are the things I didn't like.

This woman student teacher wrote: "Though I did not participate in games in my childhood....now I enjoy playing" (see also Turner, 1982).

Perhaps there was something in this kind of teaching to straight lines that led another woman student teacher to write, "in my opinion, primary school should be oriented to practical knowledge," and for another to write, "the room is dusty, no desk, no bench, no materials for playing. I don't like this stuff." The classical Buddhist approach to the spiritual meaning "laced through daily events and ordinary activities" (Gross, 1993) is more likely to declare: "The household life is a confined and dusty path; wandering forth is the open air" (Boucher, 1988). Dust sticks to me, too, that ancient Aryan race on my father's side, that ghostly gallery of exiled memories, all of whom and this or that trying to make this trip through Nepal and back home more difficult or even impassable made it all the more necessary. I want to stop so many times and ask "how far does this stuff go back in time?" For what I heard is that when treasure turns "to dust....discontent is the secret door to significant life-giving change" (Estés, 1992). One woman student teacher responded:

> I liked teacher's training programme. But there are hardly any facilities for the women teachers. Women had to go to remote areas where there were no transportation facilities. Sometimes they are given the subjects in which they have no interest.

Another woman student teacher wrote, "I don't like putting emphasis on book only avoiding outside knowledge. A third noted that "there were many books in the library in the teachers training programme. Most...were interesting but there was no field to play." Ruether (1983) writes that "converting our minds to the earth cannot happen without converting our minds to each other, since the distorted and ecologically dysfunctional relationships appear necessary, yet they actually support the profits of the few against the many" (p. 91).

Against the backdrop of the vanishing epic world

Perhaps the sheer physicality of social interaction and the rugged (epic) terrain in Nepal is foreign, yet it is what I was drawn to through the stories of my displaced family, which as many an initiation rite "seek to unite language and body by carrying the child towards a larger and larger world" (Westman, 1991). I have like *chamomile*—as my illiterate (bingo-English), Romanian-German-Canadian-Albertan-Calgarian maternal grandmother called me, directed my attention to it growing in her back lane, picked, infused, and drank as tonic/tea, and held me too in fascination in her lap and in her olive-old-dark-skinned hands—grown in that story like a rangy weed: "The more you step on it the more it spreads."

My grandmother revealed to me the power/primacy of symbols congruent with experience/life-cycle and the hard life she expressed in *chamomile* (see also Christ, 1987).

My early experiences in nature, and the meaning of those experiences, especially in the Canadian Rocky Mountains of Banff National Park where I spent my childhood summers walking through the forest, most often with family, and the three summers I spent studying the art of speaking, of acting at the Banff Centre School of Fine Arts in the shadows of the mountains, sometimes alone, sometimes with friends and teachers, returned most urgently from these three Nepalese women student teachers' and others' descriptions of a forest in relationship to a school. Here, we arrive at a Blakean view of education where the fenced-in school is contrasted with the natural environment around it, against the backdrop of the vanishing epic world:

> •a forest nearby where we used to go to play and enjoy;
> •near a forest and quiet;
> •a stream in front of the school…a green forest behind the school.

This research in Nepal highlighted a range of considerations: the importance of being gender sensitive; the value of listening to teachers in their contexts; the value of community; the value of reinvesting change in schooling with new images and metaphors, e.g., recently adopted by the United Nations is a strategy of "pro-poor, pro-women, pro-nature." Hence, I am beginning to understand the many thank yous extended "for giving the opportunity to fill this form" and the inspiration which goes both ways:

> •Work for women!
>
> •We should arrange education program for illiterate women in every village. I feel we should provide awareness program more to those parents who feel girls education not necessary. A girl can also do everything that a boy can. Welcome!
>
> •It would bring a positive implication for the development of women if they are inspired for their good work.

- Thank! Thank! Thank! Thank!

- First of all I like to say that there should not be discrimination regarding sex and there should be equal rights for all. Thank you! Thank you!! Thank you!!!

- Thank you, because you tried to collect information from us.

- I thank you for giving me an opportunity to express my feelings for your research.

- This research will benefit to the coming generation if not for us. It might help to find out some shortcomings in education field and help in the development of education.

- There are many illiterate and ignorant women in village. Is there any possibility to make them more aware?

- Due to illiteracy, the country is underdeveloped. So it is necessary to enhance education by providing adult education, bringing young children to school, organizing education programme for women etc.

- There should be proper teacher training facility.

- Priority should be given to women teachers....There are many unemployed educated women these days. They should get employment!

Women are the custodians of fire, water, earth, and culture

Women are the custodians of fire, which means responsibility for making energy available (Mazrui, 1992). Nepalese families depend on wood for 97% of their household energy and women bear most of the burden of environmental degradation and high—it has been suggested "the highest"—deforestation rates are found in Nepal:

> Over the past thirty years, Himalayan watershed forests have declined [and] the burden of the fuelwood crisis is borne by women because they have the responsibility for meeting household energy needs through fuel collection, preparation and use. Children in almost all developing countries must help their mothers with these tasks. Girls especially take part in fuel preparation, cooking and tending the fire....When it is a distant forest in Nepal, with heavy timber that requires chopping with axes, men usually do this, but women go out daily to collect brushwood and tumblewood from the hillsides. (Dankelman & Davidson, 1988, pp. 45, 66-8; see also Pye-Smith, 1988; Schuler, 1981)

In their effort to satisfy the increasing need for food and fuel, the rural population is stripping steep and unstable slopes for firewood and fodder and clearing and overgrazing the pastures; along with this, much fertile soil is being lost through erosion and landslides (Dankelman & Davidson, 1988). According to Neelam Basnet (1991),

> local ecological conditions need to be carefully addressed.... The everyday tasks of family life in rural areas throughout Nepal involve women in intensive labour farm work and time-consuming domestic chores to provide, fuel, water, and food for their children and other household members. Little time is left for activities with potentially higher economic returns, or to contribute to the economic and social development of the country. (pp. 30, 34)

Women are the custodians of water, which involves a symbol of survival and cleanliness (Mazrui, 1992). In Hindu society—and in Nepal, I observed and was told by women and children—

> it is the religious custom, first thing in the morning, to bathe in nearby river or at home if no river or stream is at hand. People believe that it makes them holy. Then, still without having eaten, they go to the local temple and make [*puja*] offerings of flowers and food to the local god. Some will wash the idol and decorate it with red and yellow powder.
>
> Nearly every home has a corner or even a room for worship of the family's favorite god. A popular god in some localities is Ganesa, the elephant god. People will especially pray to him for good fortune, as he is known as a remover of obstacles. In other places Krishna, Rama, Siva, Durga, or some other deity might take first place in devotion. (Tara C., Kathmandu, in *Mankind's search for God*, 1990, p. 95; see also Ostor, 1978)

"All of these activities" and more can be "learned from the work of training children and "redefined as teaching in its largest social sense" (Casey, 1988; Ruddick, 1989/1990). Nepalese women student teachers suggest they are aware of their environment as young girls, when it is barren, not bearing or incapable of bearing, children, animals, fruit, vegetation, produce, the flow of clean water.

One woman wrote "there was a dry stream where we used to go for toilet purposes," or of clean water, for this woman student teacher noted where "there is no good sanitation facility in the primary school. We used to go to the stream in a bit distance from the school for toilets." Another noted: "I had to do the dishes whereas my brothers had not to do. I used to find discrimination in household chores and bringing water and felt bad."

In Nepal, "walking long distances and working from dawn to dusk in order to procure water, food and firewood, is part of [women's and girls'] daily life"

(MOEC/UNESCO, 1990, p. 26). In 1988, it was estimated that 77% of the urban population and 24% of the rural population had access to a safe water supply and that 54% of the urban population and 1% of the rural population had access to adequate sanitation facilities (WHO, 1989). I discovered congruence in a Nepalese woman student teacher's words: "There was no latrine in the beginning and all had to go to barren land far away from school." This woman student teacher in Nepal sums up a common occurrence, I had observed, not only in her village: "We have to wait in a queue. There is a problem of drinking water. The animals cannot drink water to their satisfaction and it is out of question to wash clothes and take a bath." While this woman student teacher emphasized a condition at her school where there were facilities: "But there was no water. You can imagine a toilet without water!"

Custody of earth involves a woman in the "doctrine of dual fertility," whereby she "ensures the survival of this generation by maintaining a central role in cultivation—and preserving the fertility of the soil. She ensures the arrival of the next generation in her role as mother," and "this is quite apart from the more universal role of women as homemakers and as child rearer" (Mazrui, 1992, p. 42). Women student teachers in Nepal responded to the nurture and nature of an "imaginary country," referred to by one as "the motherland," the most exciting, important part of her life, and by another as "childhood. There is no problem at that time. We used to play with the soil that is the most exciting part." A third responded, "I would like to live that life again. I used to play bare-footed and imitate my mother. I was a naughty child." This woman teacher wrote, "I wish to live that childhood life again, because one is not worried. I am always worried about the educational enhancement, but time limitations and personal conditions do not favour me."

This notion of woman as custodian of fire, water, and earth, of "great powers" (Crites, 1971), in Nepal, is what Christ (1980) calls "the boundaries against which life is played out, the forces against which a person must contend, or the currents in whose rhythms she must learn to swim" (p. 3). These are also a part of my exiled memories, which Jussim (1989) captures, i.e., "mothers are our first teachers." Yet, is it they, women and girls, in terms of their qualitative world(s), their "motherland," who decide what shall be our first lessons?

The rules and alternative possibilities of female adulthood became a "mystery religion" to me, which cultural, political, ecological, urban realities of village life (the fatherland) extended in Canada (see also Hossain, 1994; Riggs, 1964). Understanding a mother's and a daughter's and a village teacher's context *and* the context of educative (and research) relations allows us "to see the significance of listening not only to voices speaking loudly, but also those faint, unclear and even silent" (Chitrakar, 1993-4).

Women articulate local, national, and global cultural needs that must also be heard to be an important part of the planning and implementation process. Cultural traditions generate values in their own right that can be harnassed to promote educational development (see also World Conference on Education for All, 1990). The experiences of social movements and rural and voluntary female mobilisation have not so far been utilised, rewarded, or recognized in promoting compulsory mass education in Nepal.

The Indian experiences of mobilisation of local resources based on Gandhi's teachings, the sacrifice of self and service to others, is also familiar to *Guru-heart*, mothers, women in resistance, and feminists the world over. These are profound human ideals that lend themselves to such Gandhian concepts as the "Bhoodan Movement" (redistribution of land), the values of learning, charity, and the spirit of co-operation to motivate people to contribute and participate in public administration and management (Colletta, Ewing, & Todd, 1982; Hossain, 1994; Polymnia, 1980). The examples of other countries are also pertinent to the Nepalese experience and vice versa, and they provide some illustration of how to attack the resource problem (e.g., see Chowdhury, 1989, on Bangladesh). In addition, an orphan herself, *Guru-aamaa* illustrates how she creates new resources by working with the creative power of marginalized/orphaned peoples and supplying them with a place to begin again.

Former Vice-President and Chief Economist of the World Bank, Lawrence Summers, in his Foreword to Elizabeth M. King and M. Anne Hill's (1993) *Women's education in developing countries: Barriers, benefits and policies,*

> refers to the estimated 100 million women who are "missing" in the world today, mainly due to excess female mortality caused by discrimination against girls in access to food and medical treatment. This is a dramatic way of presenting the shocking fact that women are often seen as dispensable in the struggle for survival. (Leach, 1994, p. 219; see also Papanek, 1990)

One Nepalese woman student teacher merges her wish to be a productive member of society, to be a "teacher and a doctor and serve the people. Because most of the Nepalese are illiterate and mostly die without treatment. This situation has influenced me." Nepal is one of the few countries in the world where men live longer than women. Leach (1994) states in her review of King and Hill's (1993) World Bank publication that

> addressing the unpalatable truth of the daily subordination and neglect in women's [and girl's] lives requires more than just a concern with getting more girls into schools and jobs (which in many cases merely means adding an additional burden to already overworked women with domestic and child-rearing responsibilities). It requires not only a consideration of women's immediate, practical needs, but also of what Maxine Molyneaux [and others have begun to raise as a possible response, more calls for] "strategic" gender needs (which implies structural change and a redistribution of power in society). (p. 219; see also Moser, 1991; Scott, 1986)

A redistribution of "power" also means a redistribution of what "power" means within the house of being for women and girls. Halkes (1986) has articulated a humanist feminist redefinition of what can be meant by the term "power":

> Power does not have to mean "power to destroy'" or "power to kill"—it can also mean the power to enable others to have life and to have it more abundantly. "Feminists talk of power as a means to empower others...All of us, women and men, could become powerful human beings, by enabling each other to develop our full potentialities." (in Oldfield, 1989, pp. 238-9)

Writing about Bangladesh, Hossain (1994) states what seems relevant to Nepal,

> in this sense, power lies in the mobilisation of cultural values. The intellectual search for meaning is essentially a creative one and this creativity emerges from an inherent faith in, and respect for, the poor....fellow citizens in a truly common and moral struggle to deliver education to people as a human right. (pp. 186-7)

To deliver education to people as a human right, fellow citizens are far from being alien "others," they become, in fact, significant other "selves," in an educational encounter described in I-thou terms. This is also a most significant point made by National Planning Commission, HMG-N/UNICEF (1992, pp. 187, 201):

> The knowledge and expertise of the people of Nepal cannot be ignored. Without access to high level technology they have developed strategies for survival over the years. Their resourcefulness and expertise can be maximised with very little effort, to the benefit of children, if planners and implementers have the courage to trust them with resources and knowledge....
>
> The main challenge will be to promote an overall strategic direction for government and communities to work together in a mutually supporting and complementary mode for the provision of relevant basic services based on what communities need and what the community and families can do for themselves.

Hence, I want to listen and to try to make sense of all the stories I hear. *Guru-heart's* best friend had moved on to another school because she was not allowed the opportunity to upgrade and to continue with her teaching work at the same time. That dilemma is also recognized by another unmarried Gurung teacher, close to retirement, in a mountain village about a day's walk away. As women teachers become captives of the school organization, of its structure, and the political and economic structure of governance that dictates to the school and the community, they developed a sense of the meaninglessness of their own work, and tell stories about the escapades of rogues. And to work with the powerful metaphor of food and communion, they developed a sense of the tastelessness of that kind of offering in return. Nepalese women (who are and who are becoming) teachers spoke about the breakdown of leadership, where leaders of schools and villages no longer act from a feeling of responsibility for the welfare of the poor, the working poor, and for the village, instead working for their own private gains to the detriment of those who do work for the benefit of community. This is an erosion in a system of trust which earns the respect of villagers.

Universalization of primary education does not seem to include teaching students either the knowledge or adaptive skills or cooperative behavior necessary for the survival, well-being, and welfare of all members of the family (see especially Joshi & Anderson, 1994, on Nepal; King & Hill, 1993, on developing countries world-wide). The short-cut to development taken by the system of schooling in Nepal (as elsewhere) shows a disrespect for the cultural literacy of mothers and daughters, the important necessity of the work that girls do or wish to do (in their respective villages, families, and the greater community) that helps alleviate the burdens of mothers, the illiterate, and the poor who predicate in their thinking. The notion they have earned or gained in hard lessons is a basic trust in taking turns.

Taking turns

Taking turns is a notion Neelam Basnet raised in Nepal and reinvests with powerful meaning for me when, during our life-history interview and subsequent encounters, I was raised in the presence of her as an advocate of female education: "You do it," she said, "it is your turn." When she said that, *she* "exploded into my heart" (Knopfler ["romeo and juliet"], 1992, track 7). I also took what she and Nepalese future and practising women teachers told me to continue to speak when and wherever I can find a time and a space.

What a mother as teacher like Neelam says has always meant so much more to me than what any love-struck Romeo, or rogue, who is "laying everybody low/ he's got a love song that he made/ he'll find a convenient street light and/ he'll step out of the shade and say: 'You and me babe, how about it?'" (Knopfler ["romeo and juliet"], 1992, track 7). We all know what happened to Juliet. Mothers and daughters remain only fragments of forms with/in institutions whose basic premises, predominant faces, taken-for-granted relationships, connections, analyses, narratives, or morals are laid low by the androcentric (see Aiken et al., 1988). It will be left up to the practitioner of "imaginative realism" to put women and girls' experience of life on the map of the world. This would not have to be a "simplistic, feminist text asserting that men are the evil destroyers and women the only life-savers" (Oldfield, 1989, p. 169). Far from it, Christa Wolf's (1983/1988) "novella *Cassandra*" is a good example of how a woman's viewpoint does not have to render the world "separatist, mystically 'female'" (Oldfield, 1989) to give back pieces, pictures, fragments recalled from words, words leaking out of stories told in a hush, between the cracks, stories that need to be told in order to counteract the notion that women's and girls' interpretations put back together cannot explain the big picture.

The art that I do is not the art that others do. It is an art of taking turns, of searching for the time and space to speak in an authentic tongue, however incoherent, inarticulate it may seem at times. It has sometimes meant being so quiet that I am marked absent, surprising everyone. In fact, one time, I was so quiet during the term in a theatre history course at the University of Calgary that when I handed in the final and only paper, I was summoned to the professor's office. The professor asked who had written such an excellent paper for me.

It is the language of my family I want to speak, think and build upon. There are people in my family who are almost totally inarticulate and have been rendered so by medical design and/or by great fits of passion. It is an art of style, of communicative style, one which I am now beginning to understand more clearly. It is not easy to build narrative bridges, and some-times I fail miserably (in my own reckoning). Yet I know that I have a writing style which I discovered through journalism (college and work), creative writing classes, and through a love of and lived-experience of rote-learning: poetry, music, drama. I have had to struggle many times throughout my life in silence to build a style that bridges diverse levels of meaning.

I have learned much from writing this doctoral dissertation. When I came back from Nepal, I was considered unfit to speak about another culture (a comment made by a scholar and a genuine personal concern given the political climate of stories that abounded about cultural appropriation). And not least, my youngest brother had died when I was in Nepal, and I had to come back home too jarringly and too quickly.

I became very angry (and anger is so very debilitating and exhausting for me personally). I decided to write the first chapter of this thesis and as *Guru-aamaa* also recognizes in her night writing of lesson plans, this one "came just so" (though I practiced and polished it by reading it aloud at two workshop/seminar sessions: one in my own department and one at The Centre for Research for Teacher Education and Development). "It is necessary to facilitate the dialectical encounter between the literary text and its audience by reducing the cultural and historical distances that separate one from the other" (Subramani, 1985, p. 156). This also suggests the need for more information about reading communities and the transformation that a text goes through in the process of being read. Subramani (1985) believes "this information would be invaluable in testing the notion of regionalism." Borges (1964) suggests an analogy of mirror and map: "Work that endures is always capable of an infinite and plastic ambiguity…it is a mirror that reflects the reader's own traits and it is is also a map of the world" (p. 87).

Recognizing the power of the audience (and the reception I received from my interpretive community was a powerful incentive), I submitted it to *Gender and Education.* In some sense, I feel this was serendipitous, and I cannot help but ask why taking up the opportunities serendipity presents subdues anger (and anger often subdues serendipity in my experience). Had I waited to begin to publish until after I received feedback as a thesis chapter, or until after the defense of this dissertation, I see now how it would not have been published in that particular issue of *Gender and Education* (October, 1994), which was being planned as "Special Issue: Gender, Education and Development" edited by Lynda Measor, Department of Community Studies, University of Brighton, UK. She writes how

> Our last special issue in 1992 focused on women's education in Europe and the editors there commented: "We hope that by including a range of material from different countries, we will encourage future contributions from other European cultures and break away from the contained and often myopic world of English speakers and Anglo-Saxon culture, as is so often the case with international journals." (Measor, 1994, p. 115)

I am glad that two of the seven articles in this journal are about Nepal (Joshi & Anderson, 1994; Schulz, 1994), the other five have to do with China (Rai, 1994), Nigeria (Erinosho, 1994), Saudi Arabia (El-Sanabary, 1994), Zambia (Mwansa, 1994), and Zimbabwe (Gordon, 1994). Measor (1994) notes, "this special issue aims to continue to expand the international perspectives of the journal [window] into an even wider range of cultures and countries" (p. 115). My anger could not have been translated into any more fitting form. For what comes back time and time again for some of the women teachers I encountered in Nepal is the fit of a form not disputed: their dispensability.

The power of 'new ways to live and tell my story'

Casey (1988) writes how "influenced by the impact of the women's movement and feminist revisionist scholarship" educational research began to acknowledge the role of gender in structuring the work conditions of teachers, and

> rather than the subject of a few paragraphs at the periphery of a discussion of efficiency and cost effectiveness, women teachers' gender has become the center of an analysis of their domination and exploitation at work. (p. 43)

I see now that my position as a good and educated but different daughter is albeit a tentative and hesitant one because my research has situated me ideologically as a researcher: My questions tended to shy away from a stronger emphasis on *Guru-aamaa*'s reading of religion. The question I want to ask myself is why? How authentic is this position to who I really am, and the kinds of questions I would rather be asking? I see now how I have been struggling with the position of researcher who tries in vain to divorce herself from seeing the teacher foremost as "artist," as "mother," and as "different daughter." My questions tended to shy away from a stronger emphasis on reading the fundamental human striving for *transcendence*. Krause (1993) wrote that

> we tell (and write) stories in an attempt to order the world, to understand and make ourselves capable of action by…"reassessing the meaning of our past action," so that we may plan projects and anticipate their outcomes, [to] determine and reflect our expectations of what life is, or ought to be, and thereby aid in forging societies from individuals. (p. 45; see also Brooks, 1984, p. 3)

It *is* up to me to phrase questions that start the telling of "new stories."

At the very end of a life-history interview, this self-described "orphan," who is now called "*Guru-aamaa*" (teacher-mother) by the village people outside the compound of the boarding and day school where she now lives said, "And I'm working extra work also. In the morning...I'm taking study supervision, dining hall supervision, I'm assistant also [house] mother also" (life-history interview, 4 May 1993). I was quite unprepared for her telling me of even *more* service work that she had undertaken, for she had moved or displaced these additional human tasks articulated to serving the institution to the last pages of her initial response about the work which she did as a woman and a teacher. And my surprise registers in my question, "Where do you find time to do all this? [Laugh]." Laughing with me she says, "Because I have to give...good education to my children" (life-history interview, 4 May 1993). Then my next question belies the secularity of my taken position (albeit a hesitant, tentative, learned response from my academic career and initiation into the "appropriate" form of and form for reading that the dominant discourses ask I take from social text): "Are you paying for that?" I ask paying but not "praying" when she has given so much primacy to the act of prayer in her discourse. And "we cannot say for each person what will be sung up, drummed up" in prayer "because these open such odd and unusual apertures in the human who participate thusly. However, one can be assured that whatever is enacted will be numinous and arresting" (Estés, 1992, p. 161). So, in some sense, I am implicated here in searching for the economic answer when, as Krause (1993) writes, we need to "question the old stories thoughtfully," and not focus "on answers that will consolidate the mental level on which the question is asked" (p. 45).

By asking new "questions to deconstruct and then" formulate "more liberating stories," (Krause, 1993), stories can engage our deepest selves and the social significance of our lives. I can only wonder now about all the questions I would rather ask, questions I might have asked before I was schooled away from considering my own questions as having the most poignancy and possibility in educational research. In this case, "Are you praying for that?" I bet I would have asked that a long time ago because I also believe in "the power of rites and rituals, the way they symbolize hopes, ideals, spiritual union and the sense of the sacred," and there was really no recipe book explaining how to take this part of myself into the future, that is, "to a grounded analysis of social practice" (White, 1992, p. 149). As White (1992) writes, "there is a great richness here which the literature all but ignores, or at best treats in a one-dimensional way" (p. 149). In this same spirit, I would like to open this "house of being" as *a place for* being, which has for me to do with seeking human experimentation ("creativity") and human qualities ("hope," "awareness," "doubt and faith," "wonder, awe, and reverence"), caught as we all are between "the two temporal poles between which transcendence ranges"—"*creation* and *destiny*"—"the basic dynamism of reality," what Phenix (1975), following Bergson, "called the *elan vital*," which is "apprehended by an act of intuition," and "yields profounder insight than the static conceptions of discursive reason" (pp. 325-6). Even though we might concede that "there will always remain some" deafness and some "blindness in the midst of the insight we achieve" (Krause, 1993).

"Freedom in the school of transcendence," for the future and practising women teachers I encountered in Nepal, "is not characterized so much by the objective content of studies," of which their narratives rarely touch on, as it is "by the atmosphere created by those who comprise the learning community" (Phenix, 1975, p. 333).

It has been through the writing and reflecting upon my own connecting story and with those stories of my mother and grandmother that I have come to own up to the habits of imaginative origination that these Nepalese women as teachers and as advocates of female education have also inspired. Although they may not have identified themselves in this way, this is the way that I have begun to extend their mothering of so many "new beginnings" in me.

Developing a disposition that connects the self/other, what Casey (1993) calls a "listening heart" or a "disposition to empathy," is a way to learn from all our stories, a way to develop teachers "who listen, learn and respond to the diversity present in their classrooms" and "answer with their lives" (Bakhtin, in Casey, 1993; see also Gomez, 1991). The human heart is a good metaphor for listening to "the song, like the drum," which "creates a non-ordinary consciousness, a trance state, like prayer. All humans and animals are susceptible to having their consciousness altered by sound," for instance, by "being softly sung to" or "by words for soul" like "the word pneuma (breath)," which "shares its origins with the word psyche," or when there is a lament/chant/laughter, battlefield conversation, or celestial song in a teaching tale, "or mythos, we know that the [Guru-]gods are being called upon to breathe their wisdom and power into the matter at hand" (Estés, 1992, p. 161). If we listen to the stories of Nepalese women future and practising teachers, we may find there are many ways in which individual women teachers' personal/social/work relations can be supported. These women teachers answer with their lives. I, for one, believe in their words and that "new ways to live and tell my story" (Clandinin, 1993a) have brought me to an awareness of why my life might be "needed, particularly in the short term," as one possible response of many "practical, enforceable lines of action. Otherwise, grand political strategies [in Nepal and elsewhere] may unwittingly overlook specific real needs" (Joshi & Anderson, 1994, p. 179).

Teaching the art of taking turns

> Spirit is the name given to the property of limitless going beyond. To have a spiritual nature is to participate in infinitude. Reason refers to the capacity for the rational ordering of experience through categories of finitude. Spirit makes one aware of the finiteness of the structures imposed by reason. To say that persons are being with spirit is to point to their perennial discontent and dissatisfaction with any and every finite realization. (Phenix, 1975, p. 325)

Guru-aamaa, *Guru-lekhika*, and Neelam Basnet also suggest how they acquire better values, by prayer as a way of participating in a collective story: In Neelam Basnet's case by praying with the villagers for understanding that girls need to be educated; in *Guru-aamaa's* case by praying with her principal for understanding and acceptance of her personal responsibility aligned as it is with family (including a non-supportive alcoholic husband), and with her children every morning as a ritual before eating; and, in *Guru-lekhika's* case, by prayer, as she tells it in her story, for understanding and celebrating opportunity and responsibility, that is, recognition of how sacrifice of her own pleasure and leisure which takes her away from the act of writing, and her tireless work is also her daughter's teaching (for more words about prayer in the professional context of educational administration, see also Greenfield & Ribbins, 1993, pp. 222-3; field note from personal communication with *Guru-lekhika*'s daughter about her desire to be educated after SLC as a journalist, May 1993).

This is a report on a work-in-progress, an account of a foray into a largely unknown world—for me—of building narrative bridges between the academic literature and the terrain of women (who are and who are becoming) teachers' interpretations. I have come to believe that this is a foundational piece of work for it has taught me and continues to teach many more lessons in the retelling: One of the most important lessons was seeing feelingly that being and becoming a teacher is "an ongoing inquiry," and "the sharing and responding to each other's stories [is] a beginning step in creating that middle ground, a new space for teacher education" (Clandinin et al., 1993b, pp. 210-1).

Motifs of exile and homecoming: New beginnings and return-home

Many beginnings have not only marked my life, but are ongoing in the life of teachers (Clandinin, 1993a). Now I am reading and listening for an understanding gained from my own reflective and transformative practices (writing, birthing, acting) and from what I have been told by women in Nepal.

I have never felt so strongly before the disappearance of mother, of growing her authority (wherever she is in deepest exile under varying degrees and forms of cultural and structural terrorism). For where was/were my/our mother(s)? The first teachings I have remembered, the first moments of coming to a state of wide-awakeness was when I was crossing the Capilano suspension bridge on holiday with my father and my mother in British Columbia. I think I was about three years old. My father picked me up by one hand, laughing, and lifted me high up over one end of the spindly bridge's sides and, for a moment I was a little being thrust down into the river's gorge, then he said, "I saved you," all the while laughing, and then put me back down. I do not remember a mother being in this scene:

> *Daughter*...simply connotes a biological relationship, a social role of no great consequence, and (depending on the culture into which a daughter is born) an expensive liability requiring dowries and protection. A society that devalues women in general may decide that the birth of a daughter is an unaffordable luxury, since she cannot become a warrior, a hunter, or a chief. Fortunately, most human groups no longer dispose of their daughters on the nearest hilltop. (Jussim, 1989, p. 98)

My father's dramatic disposing of his daughter in this way was a joke but the memory held some meaning for me. I had been holding my father's hand as a thread of connection, but why was I not holding the hand of my mother in this primal scene? If only, as characters, in stories, mothers and daughters, "were plainly linked to the world by love, friendship, morality, some political involvement or even an avowal of loneliness" (Zéraffa, 1976, p. 23). Edelman (1994) describes middle ground in terms of her mother:

> I'm sure I didn't think it then, but now I know that hour was the closest I've ever come to hell, sitting in a dark basement with a dying mother, the air-conditioning turned up high in the middle of a heat wave in July. Everything around me had been reduced to pairs of extremes: life and death, heat and ice, crazy hope and utter despair. Somewhere in that hour I lost all relation to a middle ground, and I didn't manage to regain it for what ultimately turned into a very long time. (pp. 64-5)

My experience as a teacher-researcher in Nepal and in Canada has led me from the first uncertain moments in a foray into the realm of qualitative research, far from home, to mothers and poets, to forms of short story and dramatic monologue. An "acute shift in intellectual orientation, one might even say a crisis" (Flemming, 1988), occurred for me in the name I have chosen to call myself: teacher-researcher-as-motherless-daughter. Jussim (1989) writes that "to daughter does not exist as a verb; one cannot 'daughter' someone else, whereas one can 'mother' even if you are male" (p. 105). But I see now that I was ever the daughter looking for my mother, and I have been as a dutiful daughter to many women and men whom I have met over the years, as teachers, looking to them to be my mothers. But as a daughter (existing in a verbless woman's place), I recognize some of the same problem that Helen Keller experienced in existence. To me, "to 'daughter'" is a state of inaction, of unrest, to daughter begins from the moment I had to know the name for everything, and I became a dissident daughter when I could not rest or let my mothers/teachers rest. While "telling stories," that is, "life histories, biographies, autobiographies now form the basis for a growing literature in educational theory" (Middleton, 1993), such a basis for theorizing has yet to be fully realized in studies of educational policy, curriculum and practice at the level of international development discourse about training teachers and transforming daughters and mothers from illiterate to literate.[23] Newcomers to this terrain may feel quite uncertain, "quite uncomfortable until they develop an intuitive sense" through metaphor and other playful explorations "of the guiding deep structures," just as inductees to cultures "and qualitative research may go through periods of uncertainty and discomfort as they adjust to the ambiguities, unexpected freedoms, and new ways of thinking in their respective fields" (Oldfather & West, 1994, p. 23; Reinharz, 1993).

It is popularly said, in Nepal, that "no illiterate child comes from a literate mother," that "if, once the mother is educated she will educate the whole family" (Basnet, 1991, p. 91; see Smith, 1990, on Canada). Neelam Basnet (1991) goes beyond in arguing that experience in Nepal "has shown that…significant and sustainable advance will be made only if women actively participate in seeking solution to their problems" (p. 30). Nepalese mothers'

> contribution to economic and social progress is still constrained by their limited access to education and information, which hinders the full development and utilization of their intellectual and productive capacities. This limits their ability to attain a measure of control over their lives, as well as the well being of their children. For a large proportion of women, the written word still holds no meaning. Many rural women who do become literate, however, will lose their skills because there are few opportunities for them to practice. Efforts to promote large-scale literacy programmes and to create a more literate environment in rural areas would help to improve this situation. (Basnet, 1991, p. 91)

The significance of listening to mothers and daughters has begun to take on in my work and my life Adrienne Rich (1978) captures:

> Two women, eye to eye
> measuring each other's spirit, each other's
> limitless desire,
> a whole new poetry beginning here. (p. 76)

As I complete this chapter of my doctoral dissertation, I constantly contend with what comes rushing back to me as exiled memory. At one time this move seemed such a small step to visualize a woman walking with nothing but open space and endless possibility before her: A Canadian writer-in-residence (1985-86) at my university, Daphne Marlatt, suggested to me ten years ago in a creative writing seminar to see what happened when I replaced the male protagonist with a female protagonist in a story I was writing about my family, at which point emerged as epic a dramatic piece for three female voices (daughter, mother, grandmother) about finitude, death, and reverence for life. What I had written was to help me pass through epic terrain where no other woman in my family had passed, a site of confusion and conflict, where household chores and the hard life of saving, scrimping, and sometimes just surviving and conforming ate a mother's and a grandmother's energy for the quest, and where all our lives could be worn away by the accrual of small choices and one small misstep. To be able to listen and to respond feelingly, which "comes through both understanding the deep structures and giving oneself the freedom to let go and apply those deep structures in improvisatory ways" (Oldfather & West, 1994, p. 23), is a pathway to understanding.

One woman student teacher in Nepal wrote, "My family was not different from the total national context which is male dominated and distinguished between boys and girls in many respects such as in work, in food also." A second emphasized, "My family gave me a chance to study; take care when I am sick; *provide food and clothing*." And a third noted how special it was

> the time when I was very sick and everybody was [involved] in my care. I was taken to school given good food and clothes. *My parents were happy that I was alive*. They took me on lap and cared. I got horlicks and fruits everyday. *I wish I could get that time again.*

A married Gurung teacher working in the *Kanya* (all-girl, public) school tells how her only daughter "eats only this much [showing a very small quantity with two fingers of one hand]" (life-history interview, 22 April 1993). In the *Therigatha*, the "psalms of the sisters," a Buddhist nun, Soma, was tempted "with the taunt that women possessed only 'two finger intelligence,' enough to measure rice," to which she replied: "How should the woman's nature hinder us?/ Whose hearts are firmly set, who ever move/ With growing knowledge onward in the Path?" (Gross, 1993, pp. 51-2).

Much of my life has been spent in school, college, teacher training, and in graduate school, worrying about the consequences: What will happen when I finally get back home? All that I have lived and learned about educative relationship is the clash of culture, gender, and generations. I have lived what I have read in school. How then has all of it enabled Bateson's (1989) notion of having "the skills for coming into a new place and quickly making it a home" (p. 17; see also Clandinin et al., 1993b, p. 214)? The "critical skill" of "educated listening," I picked up at my grandmother's knee, "weaving together varied qualities of tone, harmony, rhythm, volume, pace, and voice," which through my arts education and work I could extend, "using this unifying structure as a base" to understand "the fundamental qualities of qualitative research, illuminating the inherent paradoxes of structure and freedom....through the improvisation of constant comparison" (Oldfather & West, 1994, pp. 22, 24; see also Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Mitchell, 1977; Strauss & Corbin, 1994).

I have spent much time worrying about public (educational) policy, about educational foundations (gender, culture), about myself as an artist and daughter of peasants/artisans: unpropertied mothers without means. (Are you one of those worriers? an Educational Foundations professor once asked of me.) I have experienced this fear in a local/global context of "research evidence (much of it coming from the World Bank itself) that claims that there are clear individual and social benefits to be gained from educating women" (Leach, 1994, p. 218; see also King & Hill, 1993).

Having concluded, like many others, that governments in most countries have an elite school and the "old boys," often working in powerful jobs at the education ministry (Voluntary Service Overseas [VSO], 1994), who for many reasons, including the speed with which most of these countries wanted to expand their educational services, did not generally develop the kind of educational programme required as an independent nation state; instead, they tended to continue using the metropolitan models of education as a basis for expansion (Bacchus, 1992b). The relationship between "'the developing, or poor South'" and "'the overdeveloped, richer, North'....clearly affect[s] and constrain[s] many aspects of...economy and society including inevitably the education system" (Measor, 1994, p. 115) and its female participants.

Having concluded, like many others, that bilateral and multilateral lending institutions and development agencies, like many governments, excellent at expanding bureaucracies, yet in policymaking—for example, the World Bank (1990) "proposed a curriculum model for Nepal that would 'generate a broad base of human resource development...provide relevant education, be based on specific well defined learning outcomes...and take note of the special needs of the specific groups'"—seem awkward or even backward at elaborating "on what the specific needs of girls are" (Joshi & Anderson, 1994, p. 179). The story in Nepal and elsewhere seems set upon conservatively restorying "the extent to which educational opportunity for the vast majority of women and girls in the world today falls short of that available to males" (Leach, 1994, p. 218; see also King & Hill, 1993).

I have been extremely hesitant about offering a few general policy statements: "Sometimes our long-range plans and expectations work out, but the unpredictable struggles of the creative process continue, and sometimes we do 'have to scramble'" (Oldfather & West, 1994, p. 25). Joshi and Anderson (1994) suggest the following specific enforceable lines: 1) Guidelines for textbook writers: "In Nepal, the production of textbooks is controlled by the government. It invites writers and provides them with criteria—to date, the minimisation of sexism has yet to find a place in the criteria"; 2) In-service education for primary school teachers: whatever their sex, whatever their qualifications, primary school teachers "need twin skills: how to explore the issue of sexism in the existing materials, and how to deal with it....It needs to be confronted explicitly, however, and this does not yet happen"; 3) Pre-service education: "The Faculty of Education has no relevant course of study....Clear programmes need to be established"; 4) Community awareness: "male dominated," whether nominated or elected, "school management bodies [must] be involved in any changes"; 5) Research:

> various World Bank reports have highlighted the importance of parental education, particularly with regard to the infant mortality rate. For example, the 1990 Report noted that "one year of mother's education has been associated with a 9% decrease in under-5 mortality". However, in the case of Nepal, a focus on health education may result in a neglect of other areas, such as sexism in the curriculum, which will mean that girls will continue to occupy a subservient position in the society as a whole. Consequently, in order to promote more research, the establishment of a National Institute for Women's Studies could be immensely helpful. (pp. 179-80)

All these works may provide "new experiential gestalts and, therefore, new coherences" (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980).

Casey (1993) states openly that this research has a decidedly political aim, wherein "theory, methodology, and politics are seen to be interrelated and oriented" toward "progressive ends" (p. 11). But political currents have political consequences: Teachers' understandings have been elicited in order to pass judgment on them by "a large body of less overtly political scholars besides some of a conservative orientation simply for the 'information' which can be extracted" (Casey, 1992, p. 188; Casey, 1993, p. 11; Goodson, 1992, p. 9). Thus, it is becoming "even more difficult to hear...the voices of politically active teachers" in national reports on education (Apple, 1993). Casey (1992) elaborates on how this silencing occurs: "Methodologically...even while investigating an issue where [teachers'] decision-making is paramount, researchers speculate on teachers' motivations, or at best, survey them with a set of forced-choice options," or trace them statistically, rather than in person, collecting information from "such sources as district files, state departments...or through researcher-conceived surveys" (pp. 187-8). "Theoretically," she says, "what emerges is an instrumental view of teachers, one in which they are reduced to objects which can be manipulated for particular ends" (p. 188). "Politically," Casey (1992) adds, "the results are educational policies constructed around institutionally convenient systems of rewards and punishments, rather than in congruence with teachers' desires to create significance in their lives" (p. 188).

The administration of the school system in the stories of the Nepalese women teachers I encountered exhibited qualities of a punishment-centred bureaucracy, and a system in which some teachers maintain fraudulent student attendance registers only to satisfy formal requirements (Bangladesh and the United States; see Gouldner, 1967; Hossain, 1994; Canada, see Clandinin & Connelly, 1995; Soltis, 1995).[24] The increasing bureaucratization of the system, for everything in Nepal we need credentials (according to *Guru-aamaa*), escalates the unspoken tension between teachers and administrators (see also Panday, 1989). Gurung teachers presented stories that upheld ideals of democratic leadership, believing in teachers' greater participation and equality of power in the decision-making process. Personal/ascribed roles compete strongly with technical expertise and credentialization in educative relations.

Middleton (1993) says that "for feminist teachers, education has been an object of demand, a source of ideas, a means of employment, and a site of political activism" (p. 1). But in the current world economic recession, there is widespread concern to ensure that financial resources allocated to schooling produce maximum returns, a situation that threatens to disrupt and dismantle those interpretive spaces where as women teachers we have come to know our histories and ourselves. Writing in 1992, Casey saw how "the feminist perspective" still needed "to be recognized in academic studies of women teachers' motivations" (p. 207).

The implications of women's scholarship for teachers and teacher education reform are widespread and significant: Outside of Nepal, in the Asia/Pacific region, "university education departments and colleges of teacher education, courses on women and education or gender and education have been established" (Maher, 1991, p. 23; Middleton, 1993, p. 1). These programs are in the main run by white women and dominated by Anglo-American feminist theories, but women are struggling to find ways out of this fix: "At present there are discussions about the possibilities of designing structures," spaces or conditions appropriate to educational requirements for all, allowing "both separatism and bicultural" or multicultural "forms of intellectual encounter" (Middleton, 1993, p. 34). The women in New Zealand, the women in Canada, the women in Nepal and elsewhere may "contribute something unique to the international debates within the discipline" (Middleton,1993) of women's movement(s) and women's studies. "An understanding of our own and other women's life histories involves going beyond the personal," and it entails that we "also make accessible to our students the various theoretical tools available to feminists and to sociologists" (Middleton, 1993, p. 31). "It is important that such teaching," does not become "initiation into feminist theory as a disembodied form of knowledge. We must devise ways of teaching students about the various feminist perspectives in ways that focus them on [their] everyday, personal, intellectual, and political dilemmas" (Middleton, 1993, p. 31).

Thus, I believe I must raise my voice even given the understanding that curriculum integration "will shift in both kind and intensity according to the changing chemistry of the groups involved" (Aiken et al., 1988). "Our stories are not a mandate or a prescription for programs in collaborative teacher education. We know" that programs and projects take the shape they do "because of the particular people, their relationships, their stories, and the contexts in which" they come "together" (Clandinin et al., 1993a, p. 221). Thus, "curriculum integration is not a replacement for Women's Studies but an extension of it"; and "diversity of feminist theory and of women's experiences—especially relative to questions of race, class, ethnicity, and sexual preference—should be emphasized from the beginning" (Aiken et al., 1988, p. 156).

It is my belief that a female teacher-researcher should be continuing to do the kind of work I have started within any teacher training institute that is being developed under the auspices of The Asian Development Bank with HMG-N, along with the World Bank (under the auspices of the BPEP/PEDP). Women's stories must be published, collected, and housed. One of my ideas was to set up a special (experimental, progressive) session for women going through the teacher training programme, a session that would bring retired women teachers and female advocates of education into close contact with future and practising women teachers. Journal writing, paired work with expatriates and native speakers, ongoing conversation, and the sharing of stories are some possible avenues of promoting collaboration. This session, classroom, or women's college for future and practising women teachers would be a beginning space for "futuring" (Greene, 1988; Middleton, 1993).

Middleton (1993) points out that

> until the late 1980s, there was very little published research on the educational experiences of those who had become, as adults, activists for social change through the schools.…By the later 1980s, an international literature on feminist teachers had begun to develop. (p. 101; see also Casey, 1988; Miller, 1990; Weiler, 1988)

Towards the year 2000 there is a need for more stories from women teachers. Their stories will provide the raw material for further research into the relationship between mothers and daughters, the themes of maternity, "to daughter" as a verb, migration, theft, corruption, loss of treasure, manipulation, taking turns, what it means to feel at home and to build such a home quickly. According to Christ (1987, p. 155), "in *The journey is home* Nelle Morton [1985] argues that the experience of women that has been unarticulated for centuries is the source of a new imaging[/imagining] of humanity *and* divinity" (emphasis added). The experience of women in Nepal and elsewhere that has been unarticulated for centuries is the source of wisdom too. Not enough work has been done to date the different stages of the process of a gradual submergence of matrilineal traditions, which explorations in cultural myths and folklore suggest, by patrilineal and patriarchal beliefs. According to Mazumdar and Sharma (1990), on

> India's rich and complex historical record.…Kosambi links the triumph of the patriarchal form to the arrival and increasing dominance of the Aryans over the original peoples of the subcontinent. His reconstruction of this process, however, is not one of a violent overthrow of "mother-right" as described by Engels, but one of gradual assimilation through human and divine marriages.…

> Politically dominant groups, with their command over knowledge, political power, and literary traditions, are uniquely positioned to reinterpret myths and ideologies to their own advantage.…In this process, patriarchal forms have triumphed over matriarchal ones, but the remnants of matriarchal myths and symbols are still there to be used as allies in women's struggles for equality and justice. (pp. 195, 197; see also Engels, 1884/1969/1972; Kosambi, 1970)

Navigating Nepalese women teachers' terrain: Imagining our report card building narrative bridges across levels of meaning

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My meeting you here was short but it has been able to rekindle my [dreaming] hope and enthusiasm towards my writings which otherwise had remained inactive for the last 3-4 years due to many distractions, disturbances and difficulties.

*—**Guru-lekhika** (woman teacher as author), personal correspondence, 9 December 1993*

*My family and friends call me [a name which] **means heart**. I realize that though it is not an easy task for a person like me who had had an education of low standard in an underdeveloped country like Nepal to achieve success, I feel that if I could get through the barrier...I would put my heart and soul into it to achieve success, whether I succeed or not....Thank you very much for thinking of me, caring of me and encouraging me in my career....for taking so much trouble and being so kind to write to me....I feel as if I was granted scholarship....I appreciate very much for what you have done for me and feel very proud to be acquainted with you as a friend.*

*—**Guru-heart**, personal correspondence, 24 November 1993*

Excuse me for writing you on the fool's day. I received your letter a few months before....I enjoyed with my heart and soul. I was really sorry to read about the tragic death of your beloved brother. May his soul rest in peace. Thank you very much for the book. I liked it very much and so did the students.

Our school has changed a lot since your last visit. Roses are in bloom, but sometime rain spoils the show as monsoon has already started....Give my best wishes to your darling husband and lots of love to the little one.

*—**Guru-builders of the nation**, personal correspondence, 1 April 1994*

Dear friend: many many thanks for your book to give me a chance to write a some poor words. I don't forget you because you remind me a lot of...

—a student teacher's only words written in English, questionnaire, 1993

The theoretical, political body of women
as teachers:
"will not 'write themselves' in tidy arguments,"
"will not follow linear paths, or submit to the
ordered hierarchies of headings."
"the sociological voice is interrupted by
[her] 'internal talk',"
"the logic of argument is disturbed by
[her] anger, laughter, pain."
"Across the screens of reasoning,"
across the water,
"fluidities—ebbs and flows in time and space,"
"drift the faces," "the telling image" of her
teachers—
mother, grandmother (Oma),
artisan girlfriend(s), Renee, Karyn, Joy-Ruth,
"ghosts of students past,"
the baby, the supportive partner(s),
words of her colleagues,
"loud arias of sociologists."
spring awakening:
the greening hills of Nepal,
the snow-covered urban prairie she left behind,
angry words painted on fences topped by shards
of glass, reflecting on
all the sights and smells of animals, stray dogs,
rats (some already half-eaten themselves) and
*the **bisee** (water buffalo), scavenging **puja***
offerings,
elephant rides with a one-year-old son,
the surprisingly delicate cast-iron stomach,
the open-pit latrine and hairy, brown spiders,
menstruating in Nepal:
"blurred boundaries," reading 'the red thread' of
visitors' "intersections";
"the toilet paper/apple pie trail."
summer's end too soon: "harsh interruptions."
the shock of writing which begins...I had a
brother...singing over the bones...
*'to make my leg to strong enough'—**Guru-***
***aamaa**.*
*Ahh, the disguise: **salwar kameez,***
no disguise at all: "hey fatty"; "hey Delilah."
all part of her territory:
"from kitchen to classroom," building the nation
yet living sometimes "as we do
out at the edge of who-knows-where
in order not to daze the village too much"
—journal entry (1 July 1994; with thanks to
Estés, 1992, p. 196; Middleton, 1993, p. 103;
Noddings, 1991, p. 164)

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[1] Salman Rushdie (1987) describes the very word metaphor, with its roots in Greek words for *bearing across* as a sort of migration, the migration of ideas into images, of images into ideas.

[2] Oldfather and West (1994) developed a metaphor of qualitative research as jazz.

[3] Following Chomsky (1972), and Oldfather and West (1994), *deep structures* are "viewed as abstract principles embedded in thought," which "determine how speakers use and interpret language," and also "how research is conducted....deep structures make possible the social construction of meaning and expression" (p. 25).

[4] The term "evaded curriculum" I have begun to use in a kind of exploratory fashion as I heard it from Hedy Bach in a 1994 "Works In Progress Series" where she spoke on "Stories of researching life" (see also American Association of University Women Education Foundation, 1992). Hedy told me (personal communication, 27 October 1994) that it was a term she first heard used in a 1992 talk given by Emily Style in Oakland, California.

[5] According to Neelam Basnet (1991), I had a particular affinity to understand "women working in government offices [who] are given 60 days maternity leave, but there is no requirement that child care facilities be provided, and there is no provision for breastfeeding breaks. Many female government workers have to go in for bottlefeeding their babies" (p. 32).

[6] Casey (1993) and Middleton (1993) suggest as well how their doctoral research projects were "always more" in the ways their work(s) fit and are a continuation of particular journeys taken in composing a life's work.

[7] According to Rosser (1966), "it is incredibly difficult, if not impossible, to identify the vast bulk of the Newar population as being either Hindu or Buddhist. The degree of religious syncretism is so complex" (p. 79). Bista (1991), writes that outside Kathmandu Valley, "other ethnic groups are more singular in their worship, which tends to be predominantly Shamanistic with few inroads by these other belief systems....Happy to add the entertainment value of new and exotic rituals into their festival repertoire," particularly, the Newars, "were resistant to integrate a plurality of belief and ritual systems rather than submit to the subjugation or overthrow of their treasured traditions," thus, it might be said "that the Newars have never been particularly interested in issues of ideology" (p. 33).

[8] Raeper and Hoftun (1992) also suggest, in a similar vein, "dubious measures have been used to try and show that the Hindus were far the majority of Nepal....The problem was that most of the Buddhists of Nepal are not educated. When the census officers arrive they would not ask about their religion—they would ask 'Do you worship Ganesh?' They would answer 'Yes' and because Ganesh is a Hindu God they would be written down as Hindus. But in Nepal Hindus worship Buddha and Buddhists worship Ganesh. This does not mean that all are Hindus" (p. 160).

[9] *Char* means 4, *koshe* is a measure of distance, approximately 2 miles = 1 *kosh*, and *jhadi* means thicket. As Hridaya Bajracharya said, "It is a very thick type of growth where there are all kinds of wild animals:

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cobras, cheetahs, tigers, rhinos. There used to be many bandits or dacoits. It is a very risky place" (31 March 1995).

[10] The earliest sacred poetic writings are the Vedas, a collection of prayers and hymns, which were later supplemented by other writings, including the Brahmanas and Upanishads (literally, "sittings near a teacher"). The Epics and Puranas, or long allegorical stories, contain many Hindu myths about gods and goddesses as well as Hindu heroes; this extensive library of writings includes the epics of the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*. There are celestial songs and military or battlefield conversations which predominate in both (see especially, the *Bhagavad Gita* or literally, Celestial Song, part of the *Mahabharata*). *Ramayana* provides as well the story of the hero Rama, or Ramachandra, viewed as a Hindu model son, brother, and husband. These writings are only a part of the whole library. Some of these writings (Vedas, Brahmanas, and the Upanishads) are viewed as Sruti, or "heard," and are therefore considered to be directly revealed sacred writ. Others, such as the Epics and the Puranas, are Smriti, or "remembered," and thus composed by human authors, although derived from revelation: e.g., the *Manusmriti*, which sets out Hindu religious and social law, also explains the basis for the caste system, where women and sudras (untouchables) were regarded as life-long slaves from birth to death, with slavery inborn in them (see Frazer, 1898/1970; Fry, 1984; Liddle & Joshi, 1986/1989; *Mankind's search for God*, 1990; Sharma, 1966).

[11] In Nepal, "in some groups in hill and mountain areas...while women's everyday life remains to be one of hardship and of strenuous work, gender roles and relations are relatively flexible" (Basnet, 1991, p. 13).

[12] Like philosophers, these women initiate me into the meaning of and the significance of the darkness in laughter and I have found correspondence in Wendt's (1984) novella, in a last letter, entitled "Illegitimate Son of the Gods," a character writes: "*Laugh...because there is nothing else to do.*"

[13] We might see this work building in continued time for reflection in Shaha's (1992) *Ancient and Medieval Nepal*, the first draft written during the enforced leisure of solitary confinement in jail in Nepal in the years 1969-70. Or, "consider Gramsci, exemplifying and articulating the strength of [progressive] tradition...writing in a prison cell in 1933....the (re)construction of...discourses in the featured narratives of contemporary women teachers epitomizes this very capacity" (Casey, 1993, pp. 156, 158). From young college lecturer, Shaha eventually emerged as Nepal's permanent representative to the United Nations during the time of the first elected government. "Always the gadfly who nurtured the flame of democratic ideals and concern for human rights" (Locke, 1992), Shaha sought knowledge about where Nepalese people come from and who these people are, what they are about, which is the fount of his writing, recalling mythological elements to examine them, to exploit their potential. That is a place from which revolutions, which threaten to destroy not only a tyranny but a religion and a philosophy, and from which inspiration and written literature springs. That place in Nepal, for Shaha (1992), is rendered in feminine and masculine principles, and pre-Aryan elements of Hinduism represented in the cult of the Linga ("so prevalent in the religious symbiosis achieved in Nepal that even Buddhism could not escape its influence"): "the Yoni, or

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the female sex organ, became the symbol of the cosmic waters, representing the turbulent movement of the infinite possibilities of being, whereas the Linga (or the Phallus) represented emergence from this turbulence…symbolized the ordered life with its culmination in spiritual serenity" (p. 115). See Spencer (1986) on contemporary women teachers and balancing home and school.

[14] Are our stories as women and as teachers forever to be "organised within a mimetic framework," in terms of Reid's (1977, p. 54) definition of a *short story*, that is, "it makes a single impression on the reader, it does so by concentrating on a crisis, and it makes that crisis pivotal in a controlled plot" (see also Subramani, 1985, p. 37), or in terms of "femininity as performance" (see Walkerdine, 1989a, 1989b).

[15] See also Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (Dawn), 1985; Sen and Grown (1986).

[16] In Nepal, "despite women's substantial involvement in agricultural production, their control of land is limited. In all ethnic groups, land inheritance passes from father to son" (Basnet, 1991, p. 33).

[17] Parry and Lord's research, "which gave currency to the notion of the incompatibility of oral and written literatures," was extended by McLuhan who maintained "that oral culture is basically homogeneous and communal, and in it man is emotionally integrated and committed to corporate goals, whereas, in contrast, the print-oriented, overbureaucratised world of the 'typographic man' is fragmented, individualistic and alienated" (Subramani, 1985, pp. 69-70. But Finnegan (1977) reveals the "varieties of oral literatures and different kinds of oral poets," which include "free-lance and unattached practitioners," those who learn their "trade informally by listening to other poets," and "occasional versifiers, choral singers and grandmothers who are so influential…in passing on the oral tradition" (p. 191; Subramani, 1985, p. 70).

[18] Nancy Hartsock (1983a, 1983b) has written on "the Marxian notion of a privileged political and epistemological 'standpoint'.…as an engaged vision of the world opposed and superior to dominant ways of thinking. As a proletarian standpoint is a superior vision produced by the experience and oppressive conditions of labor, a feminist standpoint is a superior vision produced by the political conditions and distinctive work of women" (Ruddick, 1989/1990, p. 129). And "by 'women's work'—the basis for a feminist standpoint—Hartsock has in mind 'caring labor': birthing labor and lactation; production and preparation of food; mothering; kin work; housework; nursing; many kinds of teaching; and care of the frail elderly—all work that is characteristically performed in exploitative and oppressive circumstances" (Ruddick, 1989/1990, p. 130). "Adapting a well-known story to her purposes," Ruddick (1989/1990) writes how Hartsock (1983a) sees, "especially 'masculine' men (and sometimes women), fearful of the physicality and needs of care, develop a fantasy of transcendence based on a 'tradition of freeing the thinking brain from the depths of the most pressing situations and sending it off to some (fictive) summit for a panoramic overview'" (pp. 131, 132). And this is a point with which I must dicker, "from this perch they promulgate views that are inimical to the values of caring labor. They imagine a truth abstracted from bodies and a self detached from feelings" (Ruddick, 1989/1990, p. 132). Thus, "feminist standpoint theorists—among them philosophically minded and feminist maternal thinkers—directly oppose this

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'masculine' fantasy of transcendence" (Ruddick, 1989/1990, p. 132). I feel very uncomfortable at the either/or end of the range of human expression between Henry's (1994) *In defense of elitism* and also the Marxian notion put forth by Hartsock elaborated as polemic by Ruddick (1989/1990): "resist the lure of abstraction and the social rewards that 'transcendence' brings" (p. 133). Like Ruddick (1989/1990), "I am also suspicious of any dualistic ordering of appearance and reality, perversion and utopia. The values of care do not stand to dominant values of abstract masculinity as the one reality stands to appearance; standpoint theorists know this, of course, but any dualistic formulations tend to reduce the richness and unpredictability both of the world and of the ways in which we think about it....the flawed, complex peacefulness that is latent in maternal practice and thinking" (p. 135). My point is that there is a contribution to be made, to further an "engaged vision," by those at all levels of the spectrum who maintain the freedom to bridge levels of seeing, of meaning, "to articulate conditions of respect for unpredictable and as yet unimagined difference and variety among and within people" (Ruddick, 1989/1990, pp. 134, 136).

[19] For background reading about women and experts' advice see Ehrenreich and English (1979).

[20] Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948) revered Hindu teacher of *ahimsa* was famous for his nonviolent leadership in helping to achieve India's independence from Britain (granted in 1947). Gandhi "denied the authority of the Hindu scriptures when their teaching was contrary to *ahimsa*, strove valiantly for the eradication of untouchability and the hierarchical caste system, and promoted the equality of women in all spheres of life" (Rege, in Mankind's search for God, 1990, p. 113). Like Neelam Basnet, like *Guru-heart*, *Guru-lekhika*, *Guru-aamaa*, and future Nepalese women teachers, I encountered, Gandhi too felt the lot of the deprived community.

[21] See Christ (1987), Cixous (1980), and Wiesel (1982) for more about the power of laughter.

[22] In a similar way, Gandhi wrote in a letter to Jawaharlal Nehru (2 May 1933): "I love Christianity, Islam and many other faiths through Hinduism....But then I cannot tolerate it with untouchability" (Gandhi, 1962/1963).

[23] See Clifford (1991) for a discussion of the educational and demographic influences on the transformation of teaching into "women's work" in the United States, i.e., "daughters into teachers."

[24] Soltis (1995, p. vii) writes how Clandinin and Connelly (1995) "help us see teachers as moral agents as well as forced laborers in the factories of educational reformers" (see also Pagano, 1991, on moral fictions).

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APPENDIX A

MY CONNECTING STORY

Appendix A

MY CONNECTING STORY

(a German saying) Meine Heimat ist die Erde, die Welt mein Vaterland (My home is the earth, the world my fatherland)

...as a woman I have no country.
As a woman I want no country. As a
woman my country is the whole world.
—Virginia Woolf (1938/1977, p. 24),
Three Guineas

It was Virginia Woolf's ultimate vision of truth "that we—I mean all human beings are connected...that the whole world is a work of art...we are the words; we are the music; we are the thing itself." If only both sexes could be granted time to evolve into more complete, creative and humane human beings, we would finally be capable of saying: "As human beings we have no country; as human beings we want no country; as human beings our country is the whole world."
—Sybil Oldfield, 1989, pp. 129-130

Woman as teacher: Her story as a telling image never ends

Building and thinking in connecting lines

Increasingly, we are concerned with naming teachers, where they have come from and where they are going, what is education and development, and what or who may become a vital figure for this discursive integration in our minds (M. Kazim Bacchus, personal communication, 5 October 1994; Casey, 1993; Grumet, 1994; Middleton, 1993; personal communications with the many people around the "kitchen table" of D. Jean Clandinin's Centre for Research for Teacher Education and Development, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada; Weiler, 1988; Zachariah, 1985).

This chapter is my answer to the question: Why did I go to Nepal? D. Jean Clandinin raised this question at my candidacy exam in January, 1993. At first I was relieved because I thought it was an easy question, a "homeground" question, and "home is where one starts" (T.S. Eliot, in Chapman, 1977, p. 109, note 181.2), and a respectful one to put me at my ease. At that point in time, such an "unexpected" question almost allowed my "nonverbal, experiential, imaginal episodic memories, and associated personal theories" (Freud, 1914/1966, p. 148; Martin, 1994, p. 66) to come out in public academic circles.

I had always carried on this internal conversation between a daughter and a mother, and it made me feel somehow "lost and alone"; however, under the scrutiny of evaluators, I did not as yet trust the significance of my connecting story. I believe now that what I said at my candidacy exam was only superficially the answer. I have not been able to stop thinking about this question and all that it might mean. This was the first time in graduate school that I was asked to speak about myself at exam time, and this opportunity has initiated in me a profound, critical reflection on the devaluation of mothers in the times and spaces we call "school." Further reflection, in this chapter of my life, is leading me to appreciate the significance of "the psychological sensitivity" and patient self-suffering "that so many women" like my mother—though I do not wish to exclude fathers—"have had to learn in order to keep even a minimum of peace within...family" (Oldfield, 1989, p. 238)[1] and the cost of keeping the peace, which going to school nearly rendered me illiterate to read. To get back home from school, I wish again for a mother's insight. And while "my words are paper tigers no match for/ the predator of pain inside her," I wish to set a "place for all the pieces that scattered" (indigo girls ["love will come to you"], 1992, track 6).[2]

My mother is a telling and powerful female image for me, and I continue to look upon her as a socially significant yardstick in a world of fickle measurements.[3] And like another, a Nepalese woman student teacher, "I would like to live that life again. I used to play bare-footed and imitate my mother. I was a naughty child" (from life-history questionnaire, 1993). I believe that what is learned from such a metaphorical return to the maternal home, the *maiti*,[4] in Nepal, and elsewhere, although sometimes difficult, is significant.[5]

In her body of poetry, American poet Sharon Olds has turned on the switch of a mother's insight, turning the grief of what it means to be exiled or unmatched or naughty as a daughter of the silenced mother in the family and in society into creativity. Many creative, "quarrelsome," dissident, "different" daughters lost their mothers as teachers at an early age (for example, Virginia Woolf, the Bronte sisters, George Eliot, Sharon Olds, Gertrude Stein, Dorothy Wordsworth, Harriet Beecher Stowe) and, in the unexpected passionate returns at various points through grief to a lost mother's insight, learned early about the virtues of courage and independence and possessed an appreciation for the fleeting nature of human life (Edelman, 1994; Estés, 1992; Frum, 1994).[6] As a difficult, different daughter, I was conscripted as a "student of war" when very young—a small, eventual vantage point[7] from which Olds makes the connection between war and death ("the war to the death") within the family and ("the wars to the death") in the world outside (Oldfield, 1989, p. 202)—and I turned away from the fatherland, from following in the overweighty footsteps of my extended family's guide in Canada, my German soldier grandfather (my Opa), who said, "where we place our foot, no grass will go." But now that I stand upon an "intellectual" threshold, I have returned to read my mother's and grandmother's significance.

My doctoral research project is an attempt to weave my mother's and my grandmother's insight together with my own insight gained on the playground, from my family's and others' kitchen table politics, from the writings of women teachers and political activists, as well as, from the life history narratives and conversations with women who are (and who are becoming) teachers in Nepal. All these pieces, like the scattered remains of my mother's story, put back together may reveal something valuable and something pragmatic for measuring the private and public displacements experienced when daughters are turned into teachers:

> The collection and analysis of biographies, autobiographies, oral histories and life histories of teachers are gaining momentum as the remarkable results of this kind of research are published....But, perhaps most importantly, by respecting the "interpretations" as well as the pieces of "information" which are supplied...we are now able to understand how teachers theorize, how they construct meaning from their own lived experience. (Casey, 1990, p. 301; Popular Memory Group, 1982).

Turning points and growing detachment from the ideology of war

With my mother stubbornly in mind, I define *turning points* as a mother's, a daughter's, a grandmother's, and all those significant women as teachers' small, sane, acts of spirit, of defiance that signify a signpost and, at various points, may "turn" her (situate her closer to or displace her from a significant, yet largely invisible social valuable). However, the "turning around" or "click" into place (Steinem's [1994] word for epiphany), that sudden shift in consciousness, that process that for this daughter is a significant identity project and "always more" than a doctoral research project, that "startling reversal" (Ross, 1994) to follow the legacy of experience in the motherline, is not as automatic as Althusser suggests (Casey, 1993). Although "a willingness to listen" and to turn toward "the voices of the dispossessed is not 'natural'" (Casey, 1993; Collins, 1989), maternal thinking and practices remain important resources for education and development, and a metaphorical return to the maternal home and mother's significance should always be easier for daughters, to accept mothers as the great touchstone, as teachers.

But maternal thinking and practices have been suspect as too passionate and dangerous, too irrational. Along with Ruddick (1989/1990), White (1992), and others, I, too, have often wondered if it is "possible to reconceive a reason that strengthened passion rather than opposing it, that refused to separate love" and affection "from knowledge? In the past, women who have criticized prevailing ideals of reason or" having "failed to measure up to them have been called irrational" or demonic (as witches, as jealous bitches, as destructive mothers, all that Euripedes' *Medea* has come to stand for) and other disparaging names:

> Would it be possible to reverse this judgment, finding fault not in women but in the ideals? Or, more daringly, were there alternative ideals of reason that might derive from women's work and experiences, ideals more appropriate to responsibility and love? Virginia Woolf claimed that alternative ideals might arise from the very differences between men and women that Reason [or Revelation] meant to transcend: "'We'—meaning by 'we' a whole made up of body, brain and spirit, influenced by memory and tradition—must still differ in some respects from 'you,' whose body, brain and spirit have been so differently trained and are so differently influenced by memory and tradition. Though we see the same world, we see it through different eyes." Suppose, as Margaret Anderson suggests, that culture as men have created it "is assumed to present the entire and only truth [then] women's culture...is invisible, silenced, trivialized, and wholly ignored." Could it be that "women are even now thinking in ways which traditional intellection denies, decries or is unable to grasp," as Adrienne Rich asked in 1976? (Ruddick, 1989/1990, p. 9; see also Anderson, 1987; Lass, Kiremidjian, & Goldstein, 1987; Rich, 1976; Woolf, 1938/1966)

If we, as daughters, take our mothers as a departure point and as a point of return, to get our bearings as teachers and as migrants borne across public and private domains (i.e., child-adult, sexual-intellectual being, sexual-political subject), "expressed in academic terms," *our* female living tradition(s) of such significant migration(s) offers a "multiplicity of theories/practices within the largest category" (Casey, 1993).

Now that I have had a go at becoming an adult in the wilderness of a Canadian graduate school, as a neophyte displaced from a mother, a grandmother, their maternal significance and their maternal settings, I have tried, like the unnamed Kathmandu mother has done in her poetry which begins Chapter 4 for her own daughter on a threshold, to preserve space for my mother, her youngest sister, and their mother (my "Oma") in a room of one's own in a New World that is not an abstract prison. For a daughter, by going off to school, may become one of the shadowy "monsters" a mother may need "to eliminate from her universe" (Jordan, 1989; White, 1992).[8] And I believe now that I have worked hard to become an intellectual (a teacher-researcher), and not a monster or a stranger, in order to put displaced and exiled mothers' and daughters' lives back into perspective, to build and think through the female domain as a place where our mothers' treasure (the motherline, her telling image, our connecting story) may be preserved and extended as a rooted dimension of experience: "Our educational theories do not come solely from other people's books or from disembodied ideas but are rooted in all dimensions of our experience" (Middleton, 1993, p. 179).

My mother and my maternal grandmother have remained significant women as teachers to me in home and in school. As "ethnic's daughters," descended as my mother and I both are from a Romanian (peasant/artisan) woman, my "Oma," displaced in and outside of a Germany at war, is where my own knowledge about gender and lineage, education and development begins, not with membership in the "founding races" (both in Canada and in Germany), and it does not end at that point. For borne across mothers, borne across waters, my story too is part of the neverending story (a process and a project) of woman as teacher building and thinking in connecting lines.

According to Nepalese women who are (and who are becoming teachers), turning to and from *maiti* (an all-encompassing social institution) may, at various points, turn girls who become teachers into daughters or sons. The most important of women's cycles, the return-home, is a teaching tale told across the world, for it is an archetype, a time-honored, universal knowing about an issue of soul and educative relation, maternal light and darkest passion, love and home. The story tells about where we truly come from, what we are made of, and how we must all, on a regular basis, use our instincts to find our way back home (Estés, 1992).

Every profession has its Mount Everest, and my connecting story is how one day a daughter gets a chance to climb a bit of the way up that mountain, and it sits right in her own backyard, a place of silenced souls, a place where great human history is acted out in the world. The confident but confidential ear of my mother and my grandmother created for me, their daughter, a problem to voice; they had sown seeds of social consciousness about not feeling at home if one is hidden away in one's own home or elsewhere and robbed of their "great opportunity" (Estés, 1992) in life, a generative insight for untold numbers of women. As their only educated daughter, how could I fail to heed the call? After all, I was borne across worlds by these women. I could now act as an individual bridge for them in the New World.

Asshcton-Smith and Spronk (1993), who in their lives, work, and friendship have forged a bridge across sociology and anthropology, write how we are going to be looking even more, as artisan/peasants, as daughters and/or as mothers, as organic intellectuals have done, to how we can, each and every one of us act as a bridge, making what Perreault and Vance (1990) suggest "Native and non-Native sisters alike," women as teachers, as authors, seek ultimately to do:

> making a connection between herself and every reader, woman or man, Native or not. These individual bridges link us all in a common humanity at the points where experiences of love, pain, fear, and hope cut across differences. These individual connections are primary, but others are equally as important. Links among all women are forged in the bridges of pain inscribed here—the horror of rape, the anguish of a child's death—and bridges of tenderness, too, in the sweet moments of childhood and the loving memories of a grandparent. (pp. xiii, xiv)

But while *maiti* was difficult "return-home" terrain for me, it was no prison and neither was school and by returning to my mother's home, I can see and say without fear, that ignoring that theft of treasure, the significance of the motherline in teaching tales, is a crime. For I have no "fear" left to "fear" (I have felt it all along the journey of my growing up years, and it never stopped me from acting or speaking out even then), even knowing full well that such a move is to take professional as well as personal risks.

A generation of mothers now see for their daughters' generation the erosion of even the possibilities gained in their own lifetime (Apple, 1988; Middleton, 1993; Secada, 1989). Middleton (1993) reflects on this problem using the connecting line between her generation and her own daughter's: "The kinds of feminism and progressive educational theories that offered possibilities to my generation of teachers may seem to today's students to be irrelevant and quaint anachronisms" (p. 1). Greene (1986) has posed this radical question: "What might a critical pedagogy mean for those of us who teach the young at this peculiar and menacing time?" (p. 440). Middleton (1993) is most eloquent, in a similar mood, for she writes,

> Within the academic subject of education, feminist methodologies subvert traditional social science approaches, which, following the dictates of natural science, have required what Smith (1987) referred to as "the suppression of the personal"....Because such a scientific world-view is said to be detached from the social world and to provide an objective bird's-eye view of reality...researchers and teachers are required within such a tradition to "begin outside themselves" (Smith, 1987). The reliance of women's studies on the personal is antithetical to such approaches, and its apparent subjectivity is therefore frequently used by academic gatekeepers as a basis for its exclusion from or devaluation within what counts as high-status or proper academic knowledge....Making visible to students aspects of one's biography lays the feminist academic open to accusations—from students as well as colleagues—of being unscholarly. Developing a feminist pedagogy involves taking professional as well as personal risks (pp. 17-8; see

> also Acker, 1989; Bowles & Klein, 1983; Martin, 1985; Smith, 1987, p. 146; Spender, 1981, 1982)

Mothers and daughters might be made to seem to live inside many of the same socially constructed categories (or subject positions). Take for instance, *gender*, but see it as a "contested image," a site of conflict which neither my mother nor I have created: Even though two seemingly similar women "hurt inside that conflict" (Poovey, 1989), by the very privilege and luxury of the one who goes off, and on and on, to "school." *Gender*,

> "is an all-encompassing social institution" originating in human culture and not biology or procreation. Its social components are gendered statuses, divisions of labour, kinship, sexual scripts, personalities, social control, ideology and imagery. For individuals, gender is sex category, marital and procreative status, sexual orientation, personality, processes, beliefs and presentation of self. (in Abbott, 1994, p. C10; see Lorber, 1994)

Going to "school," I have been assisted by upper-middle class members of society to enter into the privileged, theoretical world/word of traditional sociology. Yet I have had to bleach out the messy actualities, the dirty work of those who do all the crying for the wicked, my/our New World (working-class) and Old World (kin-organized, peasant and artisan) understandings, and I have had to search in diverse directions for my mother's and grandmother's lost home, for their feelings and displaced significance, whose experiences transcend these worlds/words.

Why do I never want the answers quickly? In Poovey's (1989) and White's (1992) examples, "gender is simply one means through which the struggle to define…nationhood and, perhaps, capture power in the state, is played out" (p. 11). This is difficult terrain for me. Notions about "woman's nature," about death and danger, have also served as the currency for exchanges in the course of debates about the proper form of attendance at rites of passage that bring both adversaries and allies and their ideas to live lives into extremely close contact with one another. There is sacrifice and risk in putting it altogether.

And an individual's family stories are often shaped by the sex script(s) that have been developed within society; messages within popular culture that so often seem to privilege the most violent/sexual image to bear authority direct our behaviour and also prescribe gender roles. White (1992), Casey (1993), and Middleton (1993) encourage women to study the popular culture of their time as it is woven through the fabric of their lives. So I can now laugh about being called "Sergeant Schulzie" in my elementary school playground after the fat German soldier on the popular TV show, "Hogan's Heroes," at that time: a man who used to walk around saying, "I see nothing, I know nothing":

> This means, yes, serious academic studies of cultural institutions and social interaction, not just of the structural aspects, but of the common usage of engendered concepts and practices in song, poetry, propaganda (including from development agencies), painting, film, humour, advertisements, kin celebration. It means also more popular approaches, the presentation of disputes of gender definitions in drama and novels, the exploration of alternative images in music, exhibitions and videos. Of course, some of these things are already going on, side-stepping the development discourse, or hijacking one aspect of it. The essence, I think, is to be experimental, trying things out, getting people to think again, to question what is taken for granted, including the new orthodoxies that emerge. Perhaps the motif for feminism should be that of the jester, always aside from the main seat of power, pointing her finger at anomalies and incongruities, suggesting other ways of looking, and leaping nimbly away from the backlash her irreverence provokes. (White, 1992, p. 163)

While I was borne across by and am grounded in a German/Romanian/Canadian community of emotionally volatile "displaced persons," this social context was to remain unexamined and unexpressed for the most part in the social landscape of my Canadian schooling, while it was made obvious to me in the playground of my girlhood. I grew up in Canada relegated to the "white darkness" (Keller, 1903/1954) of Canadian history, a sad, silent shadow, a white "immigrant's" or "ethnic's" daughter, rather than as a member of one of the so-called white "founding races"—a term which Mazurek and Kach (1990) suggest also erases indigenous people from the landscape. I have rediscovered my answer to a beloved high school drama teacher's question about what I want to be when I grow up: "I want to be an observer." Well, in a way, a public observer is who I have become. I am an intellectual who studies myself and others and comments on that study. My intellectual genealogy (Foucault, 1979), my academic life history, "my personal voyage through the theoretical currents of my discipline" (Middleton, 1993), has been for too long swayed and rocked by the silence I bring to every situation about who I am and where I have come from and that silence is the heart of my lived-experience in family and in school.

In Canada, I grew up at war with who I should be; I also had to fight within myself the pervasive glamor of an image of what it means to be a woman in "Hollywood" romance, the movies of the 1940s and 1950s, which came to life for me not only in screenings on our black and white television, but in glossy fan magazines and in the pictures of my mother and father when they were a young romantic couple who had just come from a date at the movie theatre (when street photographers would take a pretty inaccurate picture for a few dollars in downtown Calgary, Alberta). One image or message I grew up with was that every woman wants to be Greta Garbo (and I fantasized about her and about Katharine Hepburn): a combination of "dramatic" movie star and the feistily independent dependent, that is, I embellished these images of woman onto a more personal and private vision of the "perfect" German soldier's wife and her life after marriage with too many hungry, needy children.

Like many of my young girlfriends, I wanted to be a movie star. But my experience in elementary school was that I was not the one picked to play "Cinderella" in the school play put on by our class. Rather, I was the one picked to play "Cinderella" before the shoe is fitted on her slender pale foot. I could be Cinderella only while she was acting as the vulnerable and dirty little "peasant" girl (or as my mother and my grandmother sometimes said about me: the "plain" peasant girl with "horse hair") who has to stay home to do all the dirty work, that is, all the housework ***and*** all the crying for the *wicked* (in the Cinderella story, an especially cunning reversal turns our focus away from the prince, and turns our focus to where we might have least expected it to return, and thus, perhaps,we cannot so easily suspect it, the maternal hearth, that is, the term *wicked* is used to signify [step]mothers, [step]sisters).

This is just one of the sharply contrasting and, sometimes, contradictory (that is, a startling reversal of) taken-for-granted images/ideas that helped me feel at home in the female domain. That which did not "fit" me, I had to refashion, somehow, with my own life. Film-maker and chief of the Communications Section of UNICEF/Nepal, Gill (1991), writes,

> in infancy and early childhood, the girl's primary contact is within her family. It is at her mother's or grandmother's knee that she is first introduced to the collective wisdom of her culture through its lullabies, songs and folklore, [while] the family's behavior and interaction only reinforce these views. (p. 7)

I practiced crying, in rehearsals for Cinderella, throughout a time of deeply felt but not as yet deeply understood contradiction (because I saw how much my mother cried in the New World, and could only guess at how much she might have cried in the old country, and I thought maybe this is something I should learn to do, only I used slices of onion brought from home squeezed and wiped into my eyes when no one was looking). But it was so painful, I could not understand why someone (even less my own mother) would cry, every night, rather than run away and live alone. For I felt that in my family we really did live separate lives, separated from a great distance from one another. I was always so detached from my mother's feelings, I never let myself cry for real, and I see now how that worked to block other feelings, like the joy of being alive, of being connected through love and affection to others.

And much, much later, during a term of my graduate school, I was invited to participate, in the Government of Japan sponsored Ship for World Youth program which brought together students and scholars from Argentina, Canada, Costa Rica, the Dominica Republic, Fiji, Japan, Mexico, Peru, Tonga, the United States, Venezuela. As leader of the Canadian student participants, I saw the way, my best friend, the leader of the Tongans, Ahosivi Nauputo, eschewed writing speeches and "talked from her heart," a way of talking about herself, her people, and her country which is so often overlooked as a way capable of producing great thinkers and speakers, that often reduced the rest of us to tears. I talked from my "paper words." All the speeches, as leaders we had to give at various ports, at the community halls in the towns and cities where we were dispersed in Japan for homestays, to youth groups and various dignitaries, and ones I had sweated over in my cabin on the ship, I tried to learn to begin to let my heart enter into the words—"that excitement or energy that is building up in your guts, your head, your forearms" (Elbow, 1986, p. 53)—another feeling that I was worried I might be overwhelmed by, but if it happened in the company of so many dear friends and colleagues, so be it. In my heart I have found was nary a feeling left that was about to lead to violence, ever, anyway. And, "for those with eyes, 'politics' cannot even begin to legitimate atrocity, ever. But you've got to have eyes" (Oldfield, 1989, p. 203). And what you must do in building New Worlds from Old Worlds to use these eyes is sometimes different when measured from the "standpoint" (Harding, 1986; Hartsock, 1983a, 1983b; Jaggar, 1983; Rose, 1983, 1986; Smith, 1987; Winant, 1987) of mothers and daughters.

There was a lot of crying on that ship (it was almost bathetic except that women *and* men were crying) and a lot of peace-making all at the same time. While we were on that ship in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, from Tokyo to Honolulu, and through the Panama Canal to New Orleans, and back again, the Gulf War, the "allied" bombing raids on Iraq began 15 January 1991. Because we were cut off from magazines and newspapers (which for me, a religious reader of both was a scary proposition), we had to rely on each other for any scrap of information about the everyday holocausts in the world. The only way I found out was through the American delegation who on that particular day in January were all of them, young men and women, wrapped up in each other's arms weeping with shame, terror, and grief. How many times do you get that picture of Americans in Canada, of a people, daughters and sons, united by their resistance to war? They had been pestering the captain of the ship to read any and all news received via telex, but I never expected that they and ultimately all of us would take it so personally. Everyone was somber for a long time and there were many activities organized, songs, and speeches against war. And we, as a ship of young and old souls, wanted to do something so money was raised for UNICEF. But only most recently, and most serendipitously by looking at peace as a women's issue, have I discovered that another ship, at around the same time, was so overtaken with the same desire/feeling: "The Women's Ship for Peace," which left Algeria in December 1990, with medicine, sugar, and powdered milk for Iraqi children. On board this particular ship there, like our own floating "university for peace and cooperation," there were 200 hundred souls,

> two hundred women from Europe, the Unites States, Japan, and several Arab nations. *Ms.* reported: "Two days before reaching Iraq, they were stopped by U.S. and coalition forces. Marines boarded the ship from helicopters, shot over the women's heads, released tear gas, and kicked the women, forcing them into their cabins." After two weeks of the enforced delay, the ship reached Iraq on January 14, the day before the "allied" bombing raids began. Fortunately, the women had just left. (Alonso, 1993, p. 272)

I did not make the connection until so much later that even in school we may be there working secretly for the military-industrial complex (and, no, I am not "crazy," though I have now seen and listened to women, in my own family and elsewhere, who have been so wrongly labelled and treated with utter contempt for saying these very things). To achieve the military mind demands growing detachment from and suspicion of the significance of the motherline. Who would want a race of "army dreamers" (Bush, 1980/1986, side 2, track 8) anyway; those like my own much misunderstood mother who suggested forgiveness was the final answer.

This chapter about drawing connecting lines is long and keeps growing. But if you, dear reader, even if only for a moment feel overwhelmed by war stories and the terrible killing fields and then desire to think the world is only made up of the wicked, think again, my friends and colleagues, think again, for there are so many stories which never get told. And perhaps if military-industrial minds read and reflected on their daughters, wives, and mothers, spilt some tears on, the untold numbers of pages which we can and must in our collectivities reconstitute and learn to read about each and every soul silenced, they would not have the time and space for "allied wars." This is a kind of school that takes a lot of time, and, in being wordy, in pages and pages of testimony, it only becomes more and more clear. Listening to a mother over the years, finally one day, her passionate refutation and lament begins to take on a larger and larger meaning.

What my mother and I stood for in the Canadian New World "home" of my father, was no soul-home, was something apart from death and danger, it was innocence and vulnerability lost at a tender age by my father who was conscripted as a Hitler youth to march in parades. And I have only been able to "come home" from a distance, from a safe space, after having gained a compassionate room of my own, in kinship built and thought with artists, dissident daughters and mothers, to revisit all the ideas being fought out in that elementary school play about the notion of a prince and his girl (the invisible military might and all those peasants and artisans who clothe and feed him which helps him to retain his privileged position).

From the painful cries of mothers, ultimately to the terrifying screams, I learned to yearn for something that would do something:

> it could feel like falling in love,
> it could feel so *bad*
> it could feel so *good*
> it could sing you to sleep
> but that dream is your enemy…
> I just pray that there is somebody out there that can hit the switch
> [of a mother's insight]. (Bush ["The dreaming"], 1982/1986, side 2, track 11)[9]

My mother always wanted me to save her but how could I when I was just a child?

In elementary school, on opening night, when it came time to fit the shoe on my foot (my Cinderella shoe, wrapped in tin foil or "silver papier," a French phrase which shows up in German language, was left behind at home), and I had been crying so hard nobody had realized how my big foot (size 7) was going to fit into the real Cinderella's shoe. She was hiding behind a stage flat, waiting to appear "magically" after the shoe was fitted, when I would magically be disappeared. But I could not be disappeared; I would not be disappeared (like my mother for I was a rebellious daughter) because I could not get the shoe to fit. There was a lot of laughter, which was embarrassing. And I think in the confusion I almost walked off the stage. But I also remember thinking how wonderful it was to be the center of attention and make everybody laugh, especially my teacher (whose name I could not pronounce well because German was my first language and I called her Mrs. Hiccup) and my mom and dad, when their expectations about my performance were turned upside-down.

Mockery and laughter can be an important part of political expression (Casey, 1993), and this I learned early in my family, for I tried again and again to make everyone laugh to stop the fighting, the seeing "red" that would turn my father into something we, the vulnerable, could scarcely believe, let alone speak about or understand, the tearing asunder, the thunder of voices raised to shrieks, the tears, the silent suffering, and the broken dishes, the swift and angry who resort to carving knives to negotiate. I would hide them at night, so I and my younger brothers might sleep in peace, so my mother or my father or some even more terrifying stranger who wandered in would not find them.

I had heard them all, these strangers, the women and men of my German-Romanian extended family in Canada, mouth the words: "An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth." I could understand what they were saying, but I could not condone such violent acts because the world I lived in was not a black and white world. I was German, but I did not want to be German. I could not help thinking about the way my father always used to tell me what his father had told him about the world: "if I say something is black, even if you know it is white, you say it is black, too" (I have always bridled at that).

And I cannot recall if it was a woman or a man in my extended family who said what the world needs now is someone like Hitler, at least all the young men would have short haircuts, and the trains would run on time. I used to get very, very angry. And I grew up, and I still do not always know or am able to say why, except finally here in this text, wanting to be imaginative, wanting to be creative, wanting so desperately sometimes to be different.

In my mother's mother's, my beloved Oma's, living room, I remember watching another Hollywood movie about the story of Helen Keller's life. I remember seeing her rage and uncontrollability (and knowing how unpredictable emotions seethe through my displaced family) and seeing how a female teacher brought her out of this physical (and spiritual) isolation into a social world where a public language takes the place of emotional reactions. The message coming to me in space and in time as it did, I realized that maybe a woman as teacher would still be a good thing to find.

Jones (1983) says, prior to this moment, Helen Keller's "life was characterized by the intensity of her internal struggle for expression" (p. 149). She was unable to make herself known and could only understand in terms of such physical sensations as pleasure or pain, and somehow, from somewhere, I must have started growing a thought again that to be disappeared this way was *not* going to happen to me. I saw the fighting mad little girl "animal" (completely deaf and blind from early childhood who grunted and shrieked) and the headstrong (and angry) teacher at the water pump. The teacher (as surrogate mother) pumping the handle like mad and signing the word for water into Helen's palm at the same time water gushed forth. The fact that Helen was then moved to write about vulnerable little girls is remarkable enough. She has written that young girls must trap their own words

> by a slow and often painful process. But whatever the process the result is wonderful. At first...my ideas were vague, and my vocabulary was inadequate, but as my knowledge of things grew and I learned more and more words, my field of inquiry broadened....The beautiful truth burst upon my mind—I felt that there were invisible lines stretched between my spirit and the spirits of others. (Keller, 1903/1954, pp. 39-40)

I did not gravitate rather hesitantly toward feminism because I had been brainwashed by feminist rhetoric or by progressive attitudes in my schools. I, myself, mistrusted all organized forms of conformance because I was reacting to my own family situation, my growing up years, my education in the home, in church, in the media, and in school. My family's stories were about women of great physical strength and courage (these were women like my grandmother, my Oma, and my maternal grandfather's mother). These women could be fierce, but it was only the men who told and found glory in stories about men killing men with lead pipes during drunken hayrides in the villages in the "old country."

A decade ago, my late brother, Michael, who died during the fieldwork component of this doctoral research project, made me go and see the Hollywood movie *Sophie's Choice*, again and again, the terrible choice to be made (which baby does she save, her terrible love story), and then together that summer, in secret, we read the words of family in a male Nazi's diaries and shivered at such kindness, such slavish devotion to one's own, and

> In *Sophie's Choice* by William Styron the heroine, Sophie, is a prisoner in a concentration camp. She stands before the Nazi commandant with her two children in her arms. The commandant forces her to choose which of the two children will live and which will die by telling Sophie that if she refuses to make a choice both children will be killed. While to be forced to make such a choice is unthinkable, it is a psychic choice that mothers have been forced to make for eons. Obey the rules and kill off your children,

> or else. It goes on. When a mother is forced to choose between the child and the culture, there is something abhorrently cruel and unconsidered about that culture. (Estés, 1992, p. 177; Styron, 1979)

And it is only most recently that I see now why I was also so compelled to explore the definition(s) of *culture* in my Master's thesis (Schulz, 1990b).

And as I sift through my mother's and my grandmother's stories, and the stories of women and girls who are (and who are becoming teachers) in Nepal, I see how we are straining to see beyond our own backyards. In particular, I see too what a French singer and a member of the French Resistance, Fenelon (1977), writing of her imprisonment in Auschwitz, 1943-5, demands a German daughter see wherein she describes a rare occasion when a group of women were allowed to go for a walk outside their prison. Working out this chapter, at 5:15 one afternoon, I almost forgot to pick up my son from daycare and these words echo something I wrote about before I had a son (Schulz, 1989), suddenly a surge of maternal non-violent resistance which takes the pain of all, the good and the wicked, regardless of an individual's ability to withstand such terror, into oneself, sent the blood into my head because I was standing throwing up at the kitchen sink, suffering in silence, and *I knew why*, but I had never thought it before. My life-partner said it was simply "exhaustion" due to sleepless nights, my terrible insomnia, he could *never* really know my not wanting to dream ever again about the electric chair like my mother just before and after her shock treatments. *(O mother if only you had let me take your place, I might have taken your place gladly, for I was a rebellious daughter, I thought I deserved to be punished, you told me often enough and I grew up feeling I was responsible, that I was to take on alone, as you had done, all of your, and your mother's, and, thus, all mothers' pain and suffering. This I could not, ultimately, have borne alone. And so I speak from the heart for all to listen in)*:

> We passed a few people, women, little old ladies trotting along, elderly men. Not a single young person of either sex. Where were they? At the war? It was a silent town; the snow we sank into muffled all noise. As we passed, no one turned round, no one vouchsafed us a look. There was neither curiosity nor hostility; we didn't exist. When would we cease to be nothing?
>
> These people, doing normal things, going in and out of their houses, these women doing their shopping, holding young children with apple-red cheeks, did they know that they were happy? Did they know that it was marvellous to see them, that for us they represented life? Why did they begrudge us a look? They couldn't fail to notice us, to know where we came from; our striped garb, the scarfs hiding our shaven heads, our thinness betrayed our origins. When they went out walking they were not forbidden to pass by the camp of Birkenau, whose sinister appearance hardly concealed its function. Did they think that those five chimneys, with their sickening smoke, were for the central

> heating? What exactly was I asking for? That that little town of five or six thousand inhabitants should revolt, that its Germanic population, resettled there since the German victory, should rise up and liberate the camp? Why should they have felt responsible for us? A sudden surge of violence sent the blood into my head: they were all responsible! All...were. The indifference of a single one was our death sentence. (Fenelon, 1977, pp. 74-5; see also Cambridge Women's Peace Collective, 1984)

I realize now that I have been living with such tremendous guilt that I, too, have often wondered if I could go on; but my mother and my grandmother were not indifferent, they did not leave me with "indifferent" stories. Is that why my Oma tried to kill herself, repeatedly, all through her own life, did she too have access to the combined genius of poet and of tragedienne, but who would remember and take significance from her reading, her idealism (her humanity) shattered by war? It was only remembered especially poignantly by my mother, for she always paints a silent village, except for Oma. And now I want to know: Am I the daughter of rebellious daughters and mothers who wished to be something more? And how long till our collectivity (of female souls) gets it right? And if we wait till our/all souls get it right, maybe there will "be no nuclear annihilation" (indigo girls ["galileo"], 1992, track 2).

My mother and my Oma taught me how to feel. But how was I to read these feelings? The bone we may have to pick with a much maligned mother, like Medea, is a quarrel not so much with the Goddess of Revelation as with what men have made of Her, what they have made of her moment of anguish and catastrophe, to triumph. I learned to "hate Germans" and myself for being "German," my mother's "shock treatments" in Canada, the scattering of her story and the scattered places I looked to find it, the carving knife story of one daughter told again of her mother (carving knives, violence in my own family). This is why I do not feel at home anywhere, why I wander and why I wonder, why I run from the reason of indifference/insolence, why I see black and white as grey, and why I seek freedom from having to uphold any and all secure notions. And according to a Canadian woman teacher from central Alberta, Renate Krause (1993), such freedom for a daughter, which is necessary to support the rite of passage to teaching and speaking out, resides in (between and among) women and girls learning to allow their own questions to test the stories we tell about ourselves.

White (1992) tells this story about her doctoral research and theorizing activity in Bangladesh:

> Penelope, the wife of Odysseus, was troubled by suitors during her husband's absence. She announced that she would marry none of them until the web she was weaving was

> completed. Each night she then unpicked part of the work she had done during the day. (pp. 5-6)

I would agree with her since this, above all, is my experience of research and theorizing activity, in Nepal and in Canada, too: "With each stitch what was done earlier unravels, as these new findings show the further questions that needed to be asked, in order to understand more fully the material already gathered" (White, 1992 p. 6)

This is my root story of homelessness and my displacement of the notions of "security," which I must learn to respect as my own to use and not just to feel hopelessness and meaninglessness. Ruddick (1989/1990) has suggested that "together mothers, feminists, and women in resistance are members of an 'imaginative collective'" (p. 244). Feminists "as partisans of women, not only" analyze, but also create "policies and spaces that give women the economic possibility and physical safety to take care of themselves and those they care for—to start again" (Ruddick, 1989/1990, p. 238). And self-named radical, Gloria Steinem's (1994) definition in *Moving Beyond Words* of what it means to be a feminist is one that "fits":

> She embraces the label radical feminist, reminding us that radical means going to the root. And what is a feminist? This is a question that has divided society in our era, divided even the feminist community. A feminist, Steinem says, is someone who is fully human, and has the "right to every human choice." (Shields, 1994, p. C12)

"The best knowledge must be motivated and tested by a sympathetic apprehension of *others'* suffering as 'intolerable, to be rejected in behalf of a transforming project for the future'" (Ruddick, 1989/1990, p. 239). "Faced [with] another Hitler figure," Oldfield (1989) believes that "the true parents of the earth would give up their own claims, rather than ensure that all other living creatures be tortured to death," and according to Simone Weil (1952),

> We owe our respect to a collectivity: First because it is food for a certain number of human souls—each of which is unique and if destroyed cannot be replaced. Secondly, because [it] contains food…for the souls of beings yet unborn. Thirdly…It constitutes the sole agency for preserving the spiritual treasures accumulated by the dead. (in Oldfield, 1989, pp. 235-6)

If complete unity of such a structure seems to be lacking in our narratives, unity of mood and atmosphere is not missing, whatever the language. As Oldfield (1989) and others argue powerfully, "Righteous collective hatreds rooted in collective fears, rooted in their turn in the traumatic memories of collective suffering, produce a collective, abstract 'enemy'—and in this way, countless people become 'the disappeared ones' of our day" (p. 232). "Germany's Antigone," Sophie Schol, "chose, even at the cost of her life, 'treasonable' solidarity with the so-called 'enemies of Germany' who were in fact the tortured victims of a mass enmity-psychosis" (Oldfield, 1989, p. 234). Oldfield (1989) writes that

> what really mattered to Virginia Woolf at the end of her life—just as it did to Maude Royden and Simone Weil—was that we should all bring the "unconscious Hitlerism" within ourselves up to the level of our consciousness, so that we might be enabled in time to confront these twin destroyers—our drive for domination and our need for acquiescent subservience. (p. 234; Woolf, "Thoughts on peace in an air-raid" [Sept. 1940], in *The Death of the Moth*, 1942)

For Steinem (1994), the legacy of her Indian experience working as a sari-wearing activist during the years 1957-8, has most recently, at the age of 60, become one of her life's biggest upturning for seeing the gentle, non-violent persistence she learned among Indian activists, and much of it, she insists, was taught to Gandhi by women (Ross, 1994).

A Canadian Métis Maria Campbell (1973), who has produced her own powerful memoir (*Halfbreed*), which I read one summer's night a long time ago, points out more recently, "my language is Cree, and so I would like to say, 'Nitawa acimowak nisimak' ('My sisters are great storytellers'). With strength and love, they speak for all of us, and in doing so they honour us" (Campbell, 1990), they give us back a mother's insight. These particular stories/poems using "pain," as Jeffers does so well in *Medea*,

> as does the Christian poet, as the primary separating agent between the egocentric human consciousness and a super-reality which heightens the pain even as it dwarfs it. This dwarfing through intensification is what the martyrs of all religious faiths have experienced time and again. It is through…suffering that [not only] man may see God. (Everson, 1970, p. xxii)

A woman may see mother, grandmother, all these connecting lines. And "the heaping on of violence" in all these narrative forms "is proportioned to our sensual insularity, for which our multiple soporifics have rendered pain innocuous" (Everson, 1970, p. xxii).

And like so many before her, like the Gandhian women teachers, Catholic women religious teachers, and African-American nonviolent activist women teachers' practice of silent and creative suffering, in October 1939, Maude Royden was martyred. By then, she was one of the world's best-known pacifist leaders, but hardly as yet having managed to make herself heard, she refused to separate herself from an opponent (and fellow Britons from the Germans) she was willing to live and work with when the fighting stopped:

> She never believed in saving her own soul, keeping her own hands perfectly spotless, if in doing so she were to be of less help to the world—"to be turned in upon yourself even from the most religious motives…this is death." (Oldfield, 1989, p. 61; *The Guildhouse Calendar*, 1931; see also Casey, 1993; Ruddick, 1989/1990)

While "she was bitterly attacked by some within the peace movement for her apparent inconsistency…in her own mind she was not" (Oldfield, 1989, p. 64).

In the narrative of a Catholic woman religious teacher working with the homeless in the United States, Casey (1993) writes that deaths

> have social causes. Deaths from exposure of the homeless can be traced to real estate profiteering, and to the allocation of government resources for military purposes. Nuclear research, the building of battleships, and funding of insurgencies, each remove money from social services, and each is in itself a cause of death.…One of this woman's religious-political projects is the prevention of socially caused deaths through public manifestations of their existence.…this woman has progressed from naming the destructive function of an ordinarily invisible facility, to acting the part of an already deceased victim, to placing herself in danger of death. (p. 44)

Self-suffering" has become "especially prominent because of the role" such techniques "played in the public nonviolence associated with Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr." (Ruddick, 1989/1990, p. 170). It "is also a weapon that induces guilt and shame in the conscientious opponent and sympathy in the 'whole world [that] watches,' and is sometimes a prominent maternal strategy," but while "Gandhi never gave up the goal of home rule," it might be said that "mothers, by contrast, may be called on to relinquish religious or political aims that are dear to them" (Ruddick, 1989/1990, p. 170). And while "mothering is central to many women's lives and indirectly affects the thinking of countless others who as daughters, sisters, or friends identify with mothers," a rational line "*about* mothers and children is moreover usually" drawn "by 'experts' who hoped to be heard by mothers rather than to hear what mothers had to say" (Ruddick, 1989/1990, pp. 9, 11).

"The customary male-focused definitions," of significant educative relations and the instruments or encasements which connect us, "which place considerable emphasis on size, continuity, longevity, corporate existence, and the accumulation of real estate and distinguished alumnae are of little use" (Prentice & Theobald, 1991, pp. 9-10), for they privilege the relation between man and space. And like so many migrants, when first we travail in public spaces where the ascendency of the motherline in daughters' teaching tales has suffered "harsh interruptions" (Middleton, 1993), my mother and I have been called one thing and then another, only to find no one really wished to hear what we called ourselves (Casey, 1993; Ellison, 1972).

So, oddly enough, to understand a mother, a daughter may need a degree in theology, psychology, sociology, anthropology, philosophy, the arts, the social sciences, and so forth. And she or I may shape-shift at any time. Sometimes I think Kate Bush is the only one who understands, or the indigo girls, or Susanne Vega, or Virginia Woolf, or Sharon Olds, or di brandt, or my closest artist girlfriends, Joy Ruth, Hedy, and Rénee, or my mother's youngest sister, or my German-born sister-in-law. All of these people have given me an audience of listeners. (And there is a great deal of residual anger in me that I hope will not offend and which I do not mean to use in such a patronizing fashion.) But, in fact, to clarify my feelings for accurate readings to be taken, it is likely becoming clear that you, as the reader, may never know enough to "get it right." And this is my point, I am trying to buy more time for us to listen to one another before we reach conclusions: An endless amount of time. And if this raises powerful feelings, so be it. The vulnerability of human existence is such that it

> offers, through consciousness, one redeeming aspect: the instant of recognition, one moment in which to behold the real, and then suffer its invasion. This is not so good as the hawks, who *act* the real in a way we can't; or the rocks, who *concretize* it in a way we can't; but it is all we have. (Everson, 1970, p. xxiv)

And to get a listener to accept our "moment of anguish and catastrophe is, as much as is humanly possible, to triumph" (Everson, 1970). Like so many mothers and daughters before me, I will not stop trying to find ways to communicate all that it is we are feeling.

Lucid knowledge, perceptual awareness of the pain of others,
radical questions, and stubborn decisions

In order to help reveal the significance of girls' and women's personal histories, for communicating feeling, and not "indifference," I need women's stories to breathe life into dusty, musty old history books, to birth me into awareness of the pain of others. History, itself, has been painful for me; written records/public images too often privilege celebratory, militaristic accounts of "good moments" that blind us to the trauma of human pain and suffering, the change to family, and to the stories women as teachers tell.

"The Argentinian and Chilean Madres spoke first of their own pain and the pain of relatives and friends of other disappeared" (Ruddick, 1989/1990, p. 231). Ruddick (1989/1990) adds,

> Writing about André Trocme and his parishioners in the French village of Le Chambon during World War II, Phillip Hallie identified three characteristics that enabled them to penetrate the confusion and misinformation with which Nazis covered their policy and then to act on their knowledge. "***Lucid knowledge**, **awareness of the pain of others***, and ***stubborn decision*** dissipated for the Chambonnais the Night and Fog that inhabited the minds of so many people in Europe, and the world at large in 1942." In the transformed maternal practice of the Argentinian and Chilean women, these same virtues of nonviolent resistance are at work. (p. 230; Hallie, 1979, p. 104; emphasis added)

And as we study the educational choices of individual women of our own and other generations as contextualized in the constraints and possibilities of biographical, cultural, gender, historical/material, and generational circumstances, policy appears three-dimensional as the part played by policymakers, practitioners, and all the disappeared ones in these choices becomes clear to the lucid, knowing gaze (Middleton, 1993). The ultimate vision of truth for Virginia Woolf and for me is that we are all somehow connected, each life has its place and offers spiritual treasures that must be preserved and extended by the next generation.

It was my own "stubborn decision" as a daughter to walk out of places where I think I am going to feel at home (and for me, wherever it is said, ***Meine Heimat ist die Erde und die Welt mein Vaterland***). "'Stubborn decision' takes on a new and collective political meaning when women acting together walk out of" where they feel at home "to appropriate spaces they never were meant to occupy" (Ruddick, 1989/1990, p. 232). The most stubborn decision I have made in university is to return to my creative and artistic roots, wherein lies what is for me most radical:

> The mother is a school we are born into, a school we are teachers at, all at the same time, and for the rest of our lives. Whether we have children or not, whether we nourish the garden, the sciences, or the thunderworld of poetics, we always brush against the wild mother on our way to anywhere else.... Your relationship with *todas las madres*, the many mothers, will most likely be ongoing ones, for the need for guidance and advisement is never outgrown, nor, from the point of women's deep creative life should it ever be. (Estés, 1992, pp. 182, 181)

What might we learn from a mother's lucid, knowing gaze about our position of privilege, albeit, a relative privilege in my case as a Ph.D. student ***and*** a mother, from our wanderings/ wonderings about the world, about *ourselves*, about the ways we might make a better world?

And one Nepalese in-service woman teacher has written,

> I want to live my childhood days again, when I had no problem and was in the warm lap of my parents. Today, even though I have got everything I am worried about my future. What would be the future of my family, society, nation, and world. This thinking worries me. How can I do better?—these are the things that often come in my mind. (life-history questionnaire, 1993)

I remember feeling lost and alone in Nepal, looking out the window of a hotel room, dreaming about the days when I might have a salary and live in a home that would allow me to do my work and also live in such gracious surroundings without worry about the next *pfennig* (in German, pennies). My son, my life-partner, and I had been living in one room of a hotel in Nepal without research funds for two and a half months, and we had worried what we would do if these funds never arrived from Canada (we could not even pay our hotel bill), and back home in Canada, we had no money saved. We could not move to rental accommodations and live more frugally. We borrowed money from a Canadian professor (Dr. Marilyn Assheton-Smith) and from a Nepali friend and colleague (Dr. Shreeram Lamichhane). And while breastfeeding my son, I looked down into the alleyway between the hotel and the restaurant, and I saw a Nepali woman lying on a dirty blanket surrounded by the kitchen scraps from the restaurant breastfeeding her baby, and she looked up. I wondered if she was dreaming about living in this hotel as I dreamed. I was already living like a King in the childhood chant remembered from the playground. What was stopping me from really seeing that, from feeling that secure? How much more did I really need in order to feel secure?

According to Bror Westman (1991), at The School of Architecture, The Royal Academy of the Fine Arts, Copenhagen, Denmark, "If you ask what a home is, you will often receive the answer that it is a place where there is security," and behind the answers he sees "an understanding that a home is a place to which one returns" (p. 17). But just whenever I think I am ever a "King," in the games we children played at the monkey bars at the playground underneath the air raid sirens in Calgary, Alberta, Canada, I want to climb back down and start all over again. Did I, by going to school in Canada for such a long, long time, take more and more of a share that was ultimately not going to go to that Nepalese mother or to any other mother? Whoever climbed to the top of the monkey bars in the Canadian (New World) playground of my girlhood always thought that meant so much more than the view from the ground. It was time for me to re-evaluate in "school" the concept of what it means to feel secure and to hold secure notions, and time for seeing how this growing understanding connected me to mothers; most recently, UN expert on disarmament for development Inga Thorsson

> has asked for the very concept of "security" to be redefined by international agreement so as to include, henceforth, the *non*-military life-needs familiar to countless women the world over—security from poverty, security from hunger, security from disease, security from unemployment, security from illiteracy, security from homelessness. (Oldfield, 1989, p. 238)

But to take a woman for a model…

To take our mothers for a model may mean to be lost and to be found again somewhere in time and space as an in-between (in-between the security of spaces, "objectified security structures" [Phenix, 1975] we call home and school). As a telling image, my mother's story began somewhere in-between "our worlds as graduate student intellectuals and as mothers" (Middleton, 1993). But let her words, like our lives, be read as "poetry in/ motion" (indigo girls ["three hits"], 1992, track 1) or "theory in action" (Middleton, 1993), for what is important, no matter how forbidding the philosophy, or how disturbing the religion, is that a mother's words may be heard but not necessarily critically reflected upon by her daughters and sons. And this daughter as teacher (borne across mothers), borrowing from and altering Emerson's visionary phrase, "never so often deceived, still watches for the arrival of a [sister] who can hold [her] steady to a truth until [she] has made it [her] own" ("The Poet," *The Complete Writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, 1929, p. 241). If this is the poet's function, it is also woman as teacher's (crossing the sea on pain of loss) and teacher as artist's, as women religious' function, grounded in the practical existence of a people, to body forth (that is, theory and practice, ideology and action united in "experience of putting my *body* where I believed"), not only having"misgivings about the human race" (a Catholic woman religious teacher, in Casey, 1993, p. 45), as have so many before her, but rather

> to understand, with compassion, the dislocation of a people, the displacement of values, and the encroachment of new ones as part of the disjointed scene….And with sensitivity and imagination [to lay] bare issues that cause us both anguish and pain and give us some sense of gaiety in being alive, in being human (Nandan, 1991, pp. 139, 147)

In "growing relationships with others then we begin to recognise ourselves," and "at this level then art makes life, and living…an endless educative process" (Casey, 1993; Nandan, 1991).

Across the screens of reasoning, across the water,

drift the faces, the disappeared ones,

the plea to see into and beyond one's own backyard

Constructed around the metaphor of teaching as an art, because like poetry, it has the power "to equip our imaginations to deal with our lives" (Rukeyser, 1949/1968), in this chapter of my life, I have begun to focus on the migration(s) that multiple positionings (in New and Old Worlds) bring about; conversations already in process and significant questions poised/posed as they are, in my case, upon two images I have borne: the artist as teacher (crossing the sea on pain of loss) and the teacher as *mother* (borne across *daughters*) in Nepal and elsewhere. From Antigone, the fervent, principled, yet martyred daughter (like Virginia Woolf who also ultimately commits suicide), to Medea, the mother who believed she was all alone with the destructive potential to carve up her own children, taking simultaneously different meanings from/of images, texts, and ourselves (as daughters, as mothers), renews faith in maternal insight and passionate refutation (Grumet, 1994; Lass, Kiremidjian, & Goldstein, 1987).

First Woman (of the chorus) says to Medea: "For the images that the mind makes/ Find a way out, they work into life." And Medea says: "Let them work into life!" To which her husband Jason replies:

> I see, Medea
> You have been a very careful merchant of benefits. You forget
> none, you keep a strict reckoning. But—
> Some little things that I on my side have done for you
> Ought to be in the books too: as, for example, that I carried you
> Out of the dirt and superstition…into the rational
>
> —Jeffers, 1970

I believe in listening and critically reflecting upon all the silenced voices of reason, even one as radical as *Medea*. As an actress and a mother, having read and pondered over Robinson Jeffers' (1970) poetic interpretation, *Medea* has renewed my faith in positive progressive

> political passion...an immediate impulse to action which is born on the "permanent and organic" terrain of economic life but which transcends it, bringing into play emotions and aspirations in whose incandescent atmosphere even calculations involving the individual human life itself obey different laws from those of individual profit. (Gramsci, 1971/1980, p. 140)

Thus, I share a belief with a number of other educators that has emerged in a context of ongoing conversations: "educative relations" wherein "reason carries the day, not imposition, status or the ability to control resources" (Bullough Jr. & Gitlin, 1991). This is a belief in oral history—"an incredibly complex genre" when "minds engage in *mutual discourse*" (Union, cited in Lightning, 1992; emphasis added)—a perfect metaphor for the recovery of voice and a receptive ear. Hence, I have begun to elicit a theoretical perspective, a rationale and an activity that are derived from what Maher (1991), amongst so many others, has called, "feminist, or gendered approaches to reflective inquiry," that is, seeing gender as a "contested image" (Poovey, 1989; White, 1992), and which "is grounded in the practical existence of" a people and of a body "and dependent upon the shifting processes of interpretation" (Teitelbaum & Britzman, 1991). Within such an approach to education and development, the teacher and the student are viewed as intellectuals, the political and the pedagogical are linked through the potential of "oral history in all its various manifestations (for instance, popular memory, life history, personal narrative)" and active listening in a form of self and social "empowerment" (Casey, 1993; Giroux, 1988a, 1988b; Union, in Lightning, 1992; Welch, 1985).

My grandmother's and my mother's connecting story

I do not own this story, but I pass it along freely in order to extend the words of significant women as teachers in my own lifetime. A Romanian woman, my Oma, was married to a German soldier and had too many starving children growing up in and around the shadowy landscape between World Wars, for Germans were starving in Europe because of the Allied food blockade after World War I was over; and she acted out the single most disillusioning event in our national history as displaced persons, our family's history, our personal histories, and took it all too personally, it might be said.

My grandmother's story is simple and complex at the same time. My grandfather is sitting at the kitchen table eating my grandmother's labors of love, whatever she could beg, borrow, and steal, and scrape together, for she always served him first (and then her own children). Then my grandmother would escape to the fields with a carving knife in her hands, calling up to her God, threatening once again to kill herself. My grandfather having heard this tireless refrain over and over, one time, sent out my young mother to the field to bring Oma back. "Similarly," writes Ruddick (1989/1990), "maternal nonviolence is rooted, and typically limited by, a commitment to one's 'own' children and the people they live among" (p. 231). Yet, "it would be foolish to believe that every woman…extended concern from her own children to all the disappeared…everywhere" (Ruddick, 1989/1990, p. 232). But by passing on the story from generation to generation, I believe, while my Oma did not transcend her "particular loss and love; particularity was the emotional root and source" of her protest, which for so long remained for me in a Fog and Night. It is only through understanding and acting on that particularity that I can, in my lifetime, extend her mothering "to include sustaining and protecting any people whose lives are blighted by violence" (Ruddick, 1989/1990).

While Oma's chapter in this teaching tale has ended, my mother and I may still come together in the New World, form our own nation of migrants/travelers, and yet learn to take from our connecting story its significance to explore a whole world of in-betweens. As Robin Melting Tallow, a Canadian Métis, in her "Afterword" (1990) has already noted:

> The circle has neither beginning nor ending. It has always been. The circle represents the journey of human existence. It connects us to our past and to our future. Within the periphery of the circle lies the key to all...philosophy, values, and traditions. All things living depend upon its equilibrium. If it is unbalanced, the effects on our physical, mental, and emotional health can be devastating....And the circle has suffered stresses beyond imagination. Yet, it remains intact....The women are the keepers of the circle. They have the power to nurture and to replenish....The written word has given us our voice, and we have begun the healing process. We are writing the circle. (p. 294)

Indo-Fijian exiled lecturer in education, now living in Australia, Satendra Nandan writes,

> To see the world as a circle is important. We stand on our shores and in our limited apprehension, define the world from what we see: the Pacific Ocean, the Indian Ocean, the Atlantic. But the ocean, like the sky, is one indivisible whole. Diversity is only one way of understanding that unity in the fragments which is our lives. (p. 136)

My mother's labors of love included, whether it is always recognized or not, whether I always understood or liked what she said and did or not, building and thinking a space for me in Canada, far from her mother's village home(s) in Romania (one she now says looks like a snapshot I brought back of a village in Nepal), and in Germany. The way she recreated it for me, with a background of raging nature, together with the distorted lives of the characters, merging in turbulent images: for her, the frightening Black Forest, which as a shy and vulnerable young girl she thought she had to pass through alone, sometimes in a dense Fog, under a threatening World War II Night sky, to get back home from school.

But the story was not right in me for I wanted to play it out on the stage like Medea, like a mother wronged and not like a daughter who has been properly educated. Once I thought the story was about love gone wrong and not about a whole world at war, a war unseen, but not unseen in Oma's eyes, in my mother's eyes. I had put too much emphasis on romance and sexual love, and because of ridiculously simple endings in grim fairy tales, I sometimes thought I could do better at and in spite of "school." In a critical overview of Jeffers' poetic work(s), Monjian (1958) writes how "few readers…can forget the oppressive mood he generates." Yet it is this "mood of black romanticism which brings into focus the doctrine as well as the dourness of tone, and we may be convinced, as Jeffers," and I take it as my mother and grandmother employing a similar technique "wants us[/me] to be, that life needs a reevaluation if things are really so bad" (Monjian, 1958, p. 88). It is "through…depressing convergence of image, setting, subject and tone" that such authors as my grandmother, my mother, and Jeffers come "closest to achieving [their] purpose, and we[/I] begin to believe" what Jeffers says so well: "'We must uncenter our minds from ourselves' to escape catastrophe" (Monjian, 1958, p. 88).

My "emotionally and physically exhausted" mother had a nervous breakdown after her fourth baby, my youngest brother's unexpected entry into Canada. She never did eat properly nor did she rest properly, and neither did she live in a "habitus," this abiding metaphor in ideology (Casey, 1993), where she could be reminded, redirected, encouraged, and supported to take care of herself before taking care of others by persons who cared about her welfare, health, first and foremost, about the distance she had come, and what she had achieved. In Canada, she lived in a nuclear family with a working-class husband, a symbol of social status in a new land, separated by a walkable distance from her own mother (but the distance was symbolically much greater than this, I know, because both my grandmother and my mother cried when we, as a new family, moved out of her house).

I think now of this Old World (German-Romanian) interjection into my (Canadian) New World as too important to be footnoted or drawn off to the side. As a Canadian Plains Cree Métis woman, Emma LaRocque (1990), writes poignantly about how the Native women of western Canada are caught in-between, like my mother and I, we all "struggle to maintain…cultural integrity at these profound levels." I think about having enough money and room in the New World, where my mother arrived as a third-class/steerage (below-deck) passenger, seasick, homesick, stripped of all her possessions, to be so privileged "to be able to indulge in the luxury of writing" (Middleton, 1993). I immediately consider my "living and working" space and how grateful I am for my affordable though slightly crowded quarters in family student housing. Middleton (1993), as a tenured academic, writes that she is "grateful for the salary that has brought release from the typewriter on the kitchen table, surrounded by scraps of food and children's comings and goings" (p. 2).

Although I understand how significant that is for woman as teacher to achieve, I find myself grateful for being able to write, cook, read, hear my son's first words, his laughter, and his cries for comfort, as yet without release from the typing at the kitchen table. It has made my doctoral work, necessarily, an affair of the motherline. And while I was able to carry my son to and through Nepal, I have had to put him into daycare in Canada, again, creating a greater space for writing, raising the ancestral angst (caught up as significant women as teachers in my family have been in-between two extreme and opposing positions).

In two worlds, the Old World and the New World, mothers, such as my mother, were cultivated to take care of family first and to never mind about themselves. They believed loyalty to their husbands and to their fathers and to their children was paramount. My mother and her mother before her had starved during the war years in Germany. Even in Canada, my mother did not eat until after her children; and then she rarely ate the fruits and vegetables which we gorged ourselves on: she ate the leftovers (a little bit of meat off the bone, a little bit of potatoes).

My mother was wrongly mislabelled by the Canadian medical establishment (principally at that time made up of males), who later admitted their mistake by amending their treatment of nervous exhaustion, as "schizophrenic." This was a word that she and I have both pronounced as ponderous, for it was like another season of the Black Forest for us as a family, and for some time, it gave us another generous cup of the waters of Lethe to drink.

My mother as teacher "disappeared," and she was forcibly taken from my social landscape when I was between 10 and 12 years old. No one told me why she was gone. I was in grade five that year and within about six weeks of living with my mother's brother's family, I remember that my marks changed from outstanding to failing, and I prayed through the dark of every night until sleep would come that my childhood family would get back home again (we were all dispersed to different relatives, and it made everything in Canada very confusing, very scary). And hence I began to build and think a notion that without recognition of a mother's significance, and a daughters' connection to the motherline, there can be no return for *all* from "school."

My mother was given shock treatments for being exhausted and, there really is no painless way to say this, no apolitical way to say this, by the so-called caring community of doctors and nurses. She was told to quit acting crazy and get back home to her family, take care of her children, or she would have to "face" going to Ponoka (a central Alberta "insane asylum" as it was known in popular terms). And in our extended family, there is a terrible paralyzing fear (amongst the generations who lived in Germany under a fascist regime) surrounding what happens to "crazy people" or to any others recognizable as different. And yet these were the very things, the ugly words, they used to call out to each other with terrible, swift, and frightening results in family feuds. The traumatic aftermath of living through a war as its survivors is just really being discovered today in Canada (see especially Dorothy Lipovenko's [1994], "The ill and confined relive horrors of the past," one of a series in *The Globe and Mail's*, "Canadian Studies: Portraits of the nation").

From my mother's personal history, I have begun to read how a female figure may take her own reading of what history makes of us and what we make of her. Then I could begin to see how this story is about my mother's and my grandmother's youthful transcendentalism turned inside out. Having written no book, these mothers have written their only words (a private discourse of feeling) onto me. And it is the technique of every woman as teacher, as author, to employ mood, imagery, rhythm, metaphor: Of these the most powerful weapon is mood, my mother's incredible atmospherics/theatrics: "like/ brushing cloth i smoothe the wrinkles for an answer" (indigo girls ["love will come to you"], 1992, track 6).

"Under the shadow of ten million slain" in World War I, "all the benignancy of Victorian opportunism turned to dust and ashes in the mouths of thousands," writes Everson (1970, p. x). After fighting in World War II, the philosopher Gray wrote in *The Warriors* (1970),

> The great god Mars tries to blind us when we enter his realm, and when we leave he gives us a generous cup of the waters of Lethe to drink....
>
> When I consider how easily we forget the millions who suffered unbearably, either permanently maimed in body or mind, or who gave up their lives before they realized their purpose, I rebel at the whole insane spectacle of human existence. (pp. 21, 23; see also Ruddick, 1989/1990, pp. 230-1)

"Even without the atom bomb, the Second World War had left as a legacy the shadow of the concentration camps, and that darkened all belief that humankind was evolving into a more humane future" (Mailer, 1994, p. 55).

Ruddick (1989/1990) suggests further, in time, that "after the junta fell, Argentinian women" as *Madres* (mothers) "insisted that violated bodies be remembered, which require that crimes be named, the men who committed them be brought to trial, and the bodies themselves, alive or dead, be accounted for and, where possible, returned" (p. 231). And sometimes we are simply not ready for the disappeared to show their faces. I know, I am always closing my eyes and wishing I was fine, wishing we were all fine and the world something it is not. While in the motherline and darkest passion remain graves, ancestors, roots, memories. I have never thought much of this out loud before because I thought I had no links with thriving not just surviving women, in my family, or in my social circle, who can interpret the significance of building and thinking connections through the motherline. But I had not yet really listened, learned, and transformed all the lessons that existed in my mother's and my grandmother's teaching tales told to me in hushed moments between our bitter and angry feuds.

A return to the motherline is a most significant return

My mother, who never experienced the range of choices that I have had in my life as a member of the first-born generation of our family in Canada, used to remind me often enough that if I continue on in university (as the first and only girl in our extended family to do so) I would no longer be able to talk to her. But I have picked up on strands of conversations with my mother and my maternal grandmother that suffered the "harsh interruptions" (Middleton, 1993) caused by my going off to "school," where ostensibly I left them behind. The significance of their stories follows me wherever I go, and this is no "mere" achievement and deserves to be recognized in this social text. And as such, the meaning of a key concept in the dominant discourse, *school*, has taken on a whole other meaning for me. *School* is hereafter notable as a structural (evaluative, finite) term of reference for a process whose meaning has become associated, especially "evident in studies of teacher education and training after the work was translated into English in 1960," with Belgian author, Arnold van Gennep's (1907/1960) analysis, *Les rites de passage*, developing "a purely anthropological stance on the relation between man and space" (Carney & Hodysh, 1994, p. 36;

Eisenhart, Behm, & Romagnano, 1991; Fuch, 1969; Gehrke, 1991; Hale & Staratt, 1989; Lacey, 1987; Sylwester, 1987; Tinto, 1988; Westman, 1991, p. 17; White, 1989).[10]

Becher and Kogan (1980) maintain, "where most other social institutions require their members to adopt convergent values and practices, universities...put a premium on creative divergence" (p. 110). The urgency of the question remains how far teacher education institutions are licensed within universities and colleges to be free to be in conflict or tension with the knowledge gained from the motherline. Gaskell, McLaren, and Novogrodsky (1989) suggest, "the devaluation of women's educational work includes work done by mothers at home with their children, and the fight against devaluation has to include them" (p. 80; see also Grumet, 1988; Smith, 1987). I have come to see that the rite of passage to teaching and speaking out is a return to what I have read it is not: White (1989)

> makes it clear...that the acquisition of "several basic tenets about teaching," should not be grounded in feelings or impulse, or, as some critics of teachers' knowledge would have it, on a "mixture of idiosyncratic experience and personal synthesis." (Carney & Hodysh, 1994, p. 36)

In White's (1989) opinion, "what needs to be pursued...is 'the study of a cultural body of knowledge that is transmitted and acquired from generation to generation'" (Carney & Hodysh, 1994, p. 36). This puts me, as a feeling and thinking woman, in an untenable position, for everything we bring as women and girls to the study of a cultural body of knowledge, an inclusive family of stories about woman as teacher, like a ground to stand on, informs us that the early learning that takes place in our lives has "existential and internal conditions" (Clandinin & Connelly, 1994; see also Clandinin & Connelly, 1995, on "secret," "sacred," and "cover" stories) and cultivates or silences voice (Belenky et al., 1986; Grieve, 1994).

I, too, had been initiated as a graduate teaching assistant to initiate my students on the relation between man and space, for I see now that I could not make any connection between my native imagery of migration and my voice as a woman teacher and the dominant discourse of education and development within which I participated somewhat blindly in a Night and Fog.[11] Like Middleton (1993) says about many of her students, I could not see myself, and neither could my students see themselves in much of what the academics required us to read because they never required we read from our own lives or from the teaching tales of a mother and a grandmother. It was only when I was pregnant and teaching right up until my son was born that my students related to me powerfully as a woman, first and foremost, as a mother and as a teacher educator, and not as a rather androgynous "intellectual" figurine. And I was worried that my "waters" would break while I was teaching, and I used to pray that this would not happen in the classroom. This would make my midwife laugh because her waters had broken in the lobby of a hospital and it had been "alright after all."

The only professor I could ever talk to about what it was like to be a mother and a scholar before I found Jean Clandinin's safe and compassionate space was with (the chairman of my department) M. Kazim Bacchus. We used to *see* the young women who had new babies, I was one of them, roaming the halls of our teacher education institution (too bad, he said, there was no community room where they could find someone to look after their children so they could still sit in on missed classes).

I had learned how to "act" the part of woman as intellectual by smiling less in my classrooms and pretending that my female body was in an of itself not significant for attention (dressing as conservatively and as androgynously as possible). Lortie (1975) puts it well in his comment that the thousands of hours that a teacher has spent as a student, and I would include those spent at her mother's or grandmother's knee, have a much more powerful effect on her socialization as a teacher than her brief exposure to teacher education curriculum. And adds Edelman (1994), "when you lose" or experience the displacement from the growing authority of "a mother…the intervals between grief responses lengthen over time, but the longing never disappears. It always hovers at the edge of your awareness, prepared to surface at any time, in any place, in the least expected ways" (in Frum, 1994, p. C9). Such loss may also be co-opted into feelings of a lack of security and/or comfort with return to the motherline as significant.

My connecting story is an integral part of all my teaching tales. It is about a listener who interprets, recreates, and expands upon a mother's experience from within her own. My connecting story has served as a kind of transitional rite: First, it is about the physical movement to and from seeing my mother as significant and learning to take a deeper reading of her words; second, it is about how she speaks significantly to me upon many thresholds (of womanhood and of becoming publicly recognized as an intellectual during the writing of this doctoral dissertation); and third, it is about her significance for me during my time in Nepal, a movement between different ecological niches, and when I was brought home suddenly to attend my youngest brother's funeral. According to Westman (1991), coming to feel at home can be described as a movement on several different levels, and my coming to feel at home has changed dramatically since returning from Nepal.

In addition, there is a fourth and final movement: As Bullough Jr. and Gitlin (1991) and others have recently begun to emphasize,

> Teacher education students come to their programs with long histories as students, [with] generally strongly held views about teachers and teaching, [and] to pretend that they do not bring with them "implicit theories"...about teaching and the purposes of education is to ignore their personal histories and to dishonor the individual. (p. 46; see also e.g., Clark, 1988; Crow, 1987)

This became apparent in starting from the analysis of a prospective female teacher's writing about her personal history: "It became apparent that issues related to gender and to the value of public service played a significant role in shaping the culture of teaching" (Bullough Jr. & Gitlin, 1991, p. 47). Mikhail Bakhtin suggested *language*

> is not understood in general, singular or unitary sense; it is always defined in terms of diversity and changeability....The plurality of social situations creates a multiplicity of languages...for, like society, "a language is stratified not only into dialects in the strict sense of the word," but also, "into languages that are socio-ideological," such as languages belonging to professions or generations. "This stratification and diversity of speech will spread wider and penetrate deeper levels as long as language is alive and still in the process of becoming"....So, for example...the language of the teaching profession is further stratified by gender dialects, by religious dialects, and so forth. (Casey, 1993, pp. 20-1; Bakhtin, in Holquist, 1981, p. xix)

"The dialogue between social languages is, written large, the same kind of process which takes place, on a smaller scale, in face-to-face encounters" (Casey, 1993, p. 23). Following Bakhtin, Casey (1993) adds, "Just as each discourse is elaborated in relationship to other discourses around it, so...it is only in relationship to the other that the self can be defined" (p. 23). For daughters as teachers, it is also in relationship to the mother that the self can be defined.

Daughters as teachers must learn to connect the language and issues of idealism (humanitarianism) and pragmatism (economically sound accounting which does not devaluate mother's labor) to the discussion of the language of teaching, learning, of civic responsibility, concern to the languages of the disciplines, and not to compromise their principles, their life-spirit, their humour, their delight in the beauty of the world and their eagerness that others should also have a chance to enjoy life and to become more fully human. They must learn to critically read and reflect upon movements to and from the motherline. In Nepal, and I might argue, as elsewhere, if daughters (borne across mothers) as teachers are to work with confidence and respect, they must individually and collectively be able to express not only why teaching and learning are important to society, but also to their mothers and to the mothers of the children yet unborn.

This is a theme which I have found acquires resonance in my own project (a doctoral research project and a significant identity project). In the (1990) ***Role of Women Teachers for Promotion of Universal Primary Education for Girls*** (a Tribhuvan University and Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development [CERID], study report), coordinated by a Nepalese colleague and study partner working on her doctoral dissertation at the University of Alberta, Mrs. Samira Luitel, has found a similar concern amongst Nepalese women student teachers who have taken themselves as "a model of female education," who work to influence others about the importance of female education and feel that a woman as teacher

> can do much more if she got the facility to work for female education [to be] an influence upon the women so that they are aware of the value of education and of an equal opportunity for girls. (Annex-A)

In this female Nepalese teacher's view, it is to become an influential person in her society that the female teacher should be mobilized for such activities.

Transitional (initiation) rites such as the rite of passage to teaching and speaking out for women and girls in Nepal as elsewhere might make particular use of the significant difference to the thinking of women that they are women whose threshold(s) and turning-points from and to the motherline "mark, symbolically, life and death," and may, as many initiation rites seek to do, "unite language and body by carrying the child towards a larger and larger world" (Westman, 1991, pp. 19-20). It is then, writes Clandinin (1993b), that we may hear "themes of aloneness, isolation, fear and discouragement as individuals worked alone to try to recreate their purposes, to find new words for the old songs." Even though

> it is difficult to imagine new stories to tell and even more difficult to live those new stories. Our own stories resonated with the stories we heard. We and others began to wonder about how to make spaces within which communities could form, communities in which people could "tell stories of teaching practice, reflect on those practices and the stories of them, and retell their stories of practice with theoretical overtones and insight." (p. 1; AcT flyer, 1991)

I think of all the missing lessons here, the teaching tales still waiting to be told. Kate Courtney, for instance, "did not rely on better feeling alone…she knew perfectly well that new institutions also were now called for" (Oldfield, 1989, p. 45), so why can we not teach and learn from her life story, from our own, our mother's and our grandmother's, as well as those from the lives of men we are always learning and theorizing from in education and development, to build a safe and compassionate space? Because, "finally, Kate Courtney's extraordinary life-spirit, her humour, her delight in the beauty of the world and her eagerness that others should also have a chance to enjoy life never deserted her" (Oldfield, 1989, p. 46). I wish I had access to her insight in order to earlier have turned on the switch of my mother's and grandmother's penetrating insights/connecting stories, to save me from all the wasted years of hating myself and all those being born from German stock. Even as we both

> knew perfectly well that there were many Germans in power who were as brutal as they were stupid, but instead of joining in the chorus of righteous hatred…she was a fearless witness to and intercessor for the countless non-brutal Germans who were not in power. No one has practiced more convincingly her faith in the equal humanity of all ordinary, powerless people….
>
> She had a little fountain in her front garden that exercised a great fascination for the local street boys. A policeman knocked on her door one day to report: "See here, lady, I've caught the worst boy in Chelsea in your front garden." Kate Courtney refused to be appalled. "Well," she replied, "he could not be in a safer place; he won't do any harm here. You had better leave him to me, Constable." She had another, larger garden at the back of her house and there she would encourage shabbily dressed tired little girls to come with their heavy younger sisters and brothers and prams, to rest among the flowers out of danger from passing traffic….Kate Courtney spurs us all on to revitalized efforts in our turn to transmit the earth and life itself to generations of children yet unborn. (in Oldfield, 1989, pp. 45, 46; see also Elizabeth Fox Howard, "My Lady of Chelsea" [Obituary note on Kate Courtney], 1929)

All these teachers would have found a safe and compassionate space, and a sharing of resources, if she was so fortunate to enter the one likened by many to that around "a kitchen table." D. Jean Clandinin has as Director of the Centre for Research for Teacher Education and Development, Faculty of Education, University of Alberta built a place where women and men teachers from around the globe can come together to talk to one another, to share space and ideas, and to develop nonexploitative research projects.

The women as teachers in Canada and elsewhere I have specifically been listening to have put me in a decidedly privileged position. For they deliberately used reconstitutive metaphors to help us build linguistic bridges between individual practices and interpretations which support the movements of change and the weaving of many strands and a multiplicity of approaches into the teacher as "someone deliberately involved in educative relationship among people. Teachers include pre-service teachers, public and secondary school teachers, university and college teachers, school administrators, consultants, nurses, parents and pre-school teachers" and the times and spaces wherein "teaching occurs in many formal and informal settings" (Grumet, 1994; Schaetti, in Wilson, 1993, p. 128; Clandinin, from Among Teachers [AcT] flyer, 1993).

Jean, a mother herself, has reconstituted an "educative community" involving groups of people in a place where women can congregate and also where women, as daughters, as mothers, can and with men meet with dignity, all who take an active interest in "educative relationships." This active interest or ethic "not only carries with it a general concern for others but also honors what others know" about themselves

> and aims at enhancing that knowing in what Belenky and her colleagues (1986) call "connected" ways, ways that do not separate argued positions from personal concerns. When in place this ethic provides the foundation for a type of school change that is grounded in an evolving and articulated form of community knowledge. (Bullough Jr. & Gitlin, 1991, p. 40)

My theoretical autobiography (as a ongoing search for strong female images) is an attempt to build and think in a space for all women

Within the interpretive community of women as educators (as teachers, as teacher-researchers) and women as gender and development activists, we have our own conversations about what research is acceptable and who can be heard. We do not see competition between the transformational work on gender issues or that directed to other types of oppressive relations, we see connecting lines. Attention to difference within the membership of this special interest group has forced us to look at our own reification of gatekeeping. We continue to expand our boundaries to include those who are marginalized by mainstream academics, some of whom are women.

The time, spaces, and resources required to define Southern perspectives are scarce and controlled by the North. A 1990s' challenge for the Northern community is to listen to their Southern counterparts, to provide a forum for their ideas, to see the creation of theory in the creation of practice, to see women and girls as social valuables, and to listen to each woman and girl's own valuable perspective as an integral part of the larger debate on the evolution of development and comparative educational theory and practice. We can only develop a complete analysis of history when all perspectives are included.

In Nepal, as elsewhere, factors such as academic training, age, race, class, caste, ethnicity, sexual orientation, research histories, and levels of success in home, school, communuity, and in the policy-making process continue to define our understanding of the journey a daughter envisions and builds on between mother and school. Understanding inequitable gender relations and learning how to change them offers hope for transforming other oppressive relations. Each girl and each woman may be able to enrich and validate this understanding or challenge it by adding new elements that may have been omitted, changing the emphasis or importance of various parts of the analysis, presenting their own analysis where they disagree with the author's perspective, and stating where they agree.

Our ongoing conversation has begun to focus on the next theme of a discernment process: Who am I as a teacher-researcher and as an activist? Where did my question come from? What do I bring to the question? How do I interpret what I see? How does that interpretation affect my future actions?

For the above brief overview of this interpretive community, I have relied on a number of authors and perspectives coming together, a number of strong female figures, as well as male, to help me see again points of affinity, points for further discussion, and to assist discursive integration in a way which has found a fit with who I am, where I am coming from, and where I am going. For I was not alone, even when I sometimes felt lost in a new place without any recognizable landmarks, others had travelled this route before (AERA [American Educational Research Association] SIG [Special Interest Group]: Research on Women and Education 20th annual conference call for papers, 31 March 1994; Canadian Council for International Co-operation [CCIC], MATCH, & Comité Québécois Femmes et Développement of the Association québécoise des organismes de coopération internationale [AQOCI], 1991, pp. 159-60, 163; Casey, 1993; Grumet, 1994; Middleton, 1993; White, 1992).

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[1] Maude Royden (1876-1956) invokes such psychological sensitivity. "Born the youngest child of Sir Thomas Royden, the Cunard shipping magnate and Conservative MP," she "might seem to have been destined for a life of decently obscure high privilege" (Oldfield, 1989, p. 47). "Although no saint," Sybil Oldfield (1989) writes that Maude "was that very rare creature, a great woman orator.... blessed with an exceptionally alive, laughing personality, and this combined with an outstanding gift for reaching out in sympathy to those in trouble, made her a wonderfully attractive human being to many people" (pp. 47-8). According to "her lifelong friend Dame Kathleen Courtney," speaking at Maude's memorial service, "People

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are not followed and loved as Maude Royden was followed and loved…because of what they have done, but because of what they are" (in Oldfield, 1989, p. 48). Dame Sybil Thorndike said of her, "What a speaker—what a preacher," and Oldfield (1989) has suggested further that Royden was "the political preacher." Royden wrote in *Equality in the Spiritual World*, "It is not possible to argue that women cannot prophesy, for they have prophesied" (in Oldfield, 1989, p. 47). Her words are coming alive again, and only recently, as Sheila Fletcher is writing the first full-length biography of Maude Royden.

[2] Silverman (1977) writes, "for perhaps the last fifty years, since 1929, childraising manuals and popular journals have informed their readers that mothers and daughters should not be dependent on each other" (p. 35).

[3] I have taken up the term "a world of fickle measure" after listening to "three hits" (indigo girls, 1992, track 1): "this world's a fickle/ measure." Silverman (1977) writes how often mothers and daughters, in Alberta, "have had to admire, love, and relate to each other half in the shadows" (p. 35).

[4] My understanding about the significance of *maiti* has grown from numerous conversations with Roshan and Kalpana Chitrakar (personal communication, 1994) who have spoken about the maternal home as a place where daughters *may* be more outspoken, less docile, and free. Upon marriage, the daughter is widely recognized in Nepal to symbolically and literally leave *maiti* and travel to another's house, not her own place, but another's, that is, home to husband and mother-in-law (*arkhako ghar*), wherein she may lose whatever sense of power she might have gained in her mother's home.

[5] The immigrants with whom Silverman (1977) spoke, in Alberta, "a generation of women raised in a web of family relationships, were always aware that the relationship between mothers and daughters was one that endured" (p. 35).

[6] Canadian writer Linda Frum (1994), the daughter of the late, great TV and radio journalist Barbara Frum whose voice I heard nightly on CBC's radio program, "As It Happens," and I took to her as if she was my surrogate mother for I listened to her interview ordinary and extraordinary people from all over the globe as I did my homework at my mother's own kitchen table), in her review of Hope Edelman's (1994) first book, writes: "When I first heard about a book entitled *Motherless Daughters*, I knew immediately that I needed to read it and keep it handy at my bedside. Like the 154 women surveyed in this book, I too belong to that terrible sorority of women who define themselves by loss. We may be other things: career women, community members, wives, even mothers ourselves, but as…Edelman suggests…women who lose their mothers at a young age continue to be, more than anything else, motherless daughters" (p. C9).

[7] P. K. Page asks (1994) us to consider our vantage point: "For whom do you live? Can it be yourself?/ For whom then? Not for this unlovely world,/ Not for the rotting waters of mischance,/ Not for the tall, eventual catafalque."

[8] Like Robinson Jeffers (1970) has in his redaction of *Medea*, I wish to shine a torch on a much maligned and misunderstood mother, to bring maternal light and darkest passion out. Just as the First Woman of the

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Chorus says to the Nurse about the one left to brood in a kind of Night and Fog: "Old and honored servant of a great house, do you think it is wise/ To leave your lady alone in there, except perhaps a few slaves/ building that terrible acropolis/ Of deadly thoughts? We Greeks believe that solitude is very/ dangerous, great passions grow into monsters/ In the dark of the mind; but if you share them with loving/ friends they remain human, they can be endured./ I think you ought to persuade Medea to come from the dark/ dwelling and speak with us, before her heart breaks,/ Or she does harm to herself. She has lived among us, we've/ learned to love her, we'd gladly tell her so."

[9] I have been listening to Kate Bush's (1986) compilation, *The Whole Story*, while working through this section for further inspiration.

[10] Feminist poet, Adrienne Rich: "Throughout patriarchal mythology, dream symbolism, theology, language, two ideas flow side by side: one that the female body is impure, corrupt, the site of discharges, bleedings, dangerous to masculinity, a source of moral and physical contamination, 'the devil's way'" (in Coomaraswamy, 1991, p. 9). My (maternal) grandfather, my Opa, when I asked him, as an adolescent girl if his wife, my Oma, was a (Romanian) gypsy, not really knowing what *gypsy* meant to him as he was a soldier in the Second World War, because I knew how she loved to sing, and to make me laugh, (and she'd steal to feed him), raised his hand to strike. While he was the significant Elder in our extended family, and he didn't have to hit me, for I respected him even still, I now think even more that that was a good question. "Do not cringe and make yourself small," writes Estés (1992, p. 198), if you are called as I was, by my grandfather, by my mother and father, as someone "with the devil in you." (But Opa, "whose turn is it anyway…every devil i meet becomes a friend of mine, every devil i meet becomes an angel in disguise" [here I am listening to "jonas & ezekial," indigo girls, 1992, track 5] as someone called "the black sheep" by my own family, "the maverick, the lone wolf," and other names [all disparaging] for going to school for so long and loving it and wanting more of it.) Estés (1992) says "those with slow seeing say a nonconformist is a blight on society" (p. 198). And it has been proven over and over again, over the centuries, what being different means. "On the other hand," according to Rich, "as mother, the woman is beneficent, sacred, pure, asexual, nourishing, and the physical potential for motherhood—that same body with its bleedings and mysteries—is her single destiny and justification in life. In order to maintain such notions, each in its contradictory purity, the masculine imagination has had to divide women, to see us, and force us to see ourselves, as polarised into good and evil, fertile and barren, pure or impure" (in Coomaraswamy, 1991, p. 9).

[11] Listen to the ways I have been expected to initiate others to the feminist movement in Canada. As a graduate teaching assistant and as a sessional instructor I have been initiated into a map of knowledge, which I should then teach (or initiate) my students (men and women becoming teachers themselves) how to begin to read the discipline of education. In a compulsory introductory text which outlines educational issues in Canada, two senior male professors discuss the feminist movement in one essay, a social

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phenomena, they add, which is "not discussed elsewhere in this book" (DeFaveri & Kach, 1986, p. 141). They outline what, as self-described liberals, they believe the task of education is, namely, "to give people the skills needed to deal with the problems of life" (DeFaveri & Kach, 1986, p. 141). With Wittgenstein's (1980) words, they begin: "The problems of life are insoluble on the surface and can only be solved in depth" (p. 74; in DeFaveri & Kach, 1986). I think this statement encapsulates neatly what I see as a profound contradiction. A complex issue has been rendered in surface dimensions only. There are four paragraphs on "The Feminist Movement" in an 18-page article entitled "Some Current Educational Issues" which would serve as a navigation guide for my own and my students' inquiries. DeFaveri & Kach (1986) write that "The feminist movement is a major contemporary social phenomenon and, as long as the fanatical element is kept in check, may help both women and men lead fulfilling lives" (p. 143). No female authors have been included in the book, *Essays on Canadian Education*, which contains their writing. No feminist authors are cited by DeFaveri and Kach (1986), and they name only one woman (whose work is not cited) who they say fits into the fanatical camp "which tries to turn self-righteousness into a profession" (p. 143).

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW GUIDES

Appendix B

INTERVIEW GUIDES

(Women's Oral History Resource Section, 1977, pp. 89-94.)

Topical Guide for Oral History Interviews with Women, developed by Sherna Gluck (1977) for the Feminist History Research Project, Topanga, California.

The best interview allows for the flow of material in a natural manner, within the interviewee's own framework. This topical guide should be used only to sensitize the interviewer to areas that might be considered in the development of an interview outline tailored to the individual interviewee. For each interviewee it is the interviewer's responsibility to research those areas which specifically affect her life, and to place these general suggestions within that specifically affect her life, and to place these general suggestions within that specific framework.

The following are only suggestions based on my own work and should be continually revised, added to, and changed.

I. Basic Background Information

A. Family history:

Trace family history beginning with grandparents: background; when they settled in the community in which interviewee's parents were born; what they did; their values. Include any special interest material (e.g., abolition, Civil War involvement; slave experiences; pogrom experiences; immigration; etc.).

Relationship of interviewee to grandparents.

Parents (including family names): birthplace; approximate dates of birth; how parents met, married; educational background; work/occupation; general values; attitudes toward women; community involvement; political beliefs.

Interviewee's birth date, place, and circumstances. Siblings, birth order.

B. Description of social environment, family life, early years:

Size and sense of community; family position within it.

Description of family dwelling, including the members of the household; the size and arrangement of the rooms (including sufficient details to be able to assess family circumstances, e.g., how many shared a room, a bed, was there running water, plumbing, etc.).

Household responsibilities, including decision-making areas of mother and father.

Family relationships: relationship to my mother, father, siblings, other family members living in household. How did the family spend time together? Were there family holidays, reunions? Did the family eat together? Which meals? What was the pattern of seating, conversation during meals?

Recollections of births, weddings, deaths? Traditions surrounding these events.

Role of religion in home/family life.

II. Childhood and Adolescence

A. Education:

Recollections of school, teachers. Trace schooling, including level attained, type of curriculum, interests, expectations, school activities.

Parents' attitudes toward education; different expectations for male and female children.

Other forms of schooling, including night school, union classes, etc. Special training, preparation for job, career.

B. Social relationships:

Who were childhood companions? Relationships? What kind of games were played? With whom? Rules? Equipment?

Teenage associations: relationship to boys, girls. Activities. Dating and courtship patterns.

How homogeneous was the social group, e.g., ethnic, religious, racial?

C. Family relationships and responsibilities in the home:

What kind of responsibilities were held in the home? Differences between boys and girls.

How did the family spend time with each other?

Who disciplined the children? How?

Were there disagreements with parents? Over what? How resolved?

D. Puberty and sex education:

Preparation for menstruation: by whom? When? First menstrual experience: feelings; what kind of materials/devices used? How handled?

Knowledge about sex: by whom? When? How? If appropriate, early sexual activity.

E. Miscellaneous:

General description of reading materials, clothing, physical activities, hair styles can help to reveal values. Explore these kinds of areas in general and inquire about conflicts with parents over these issues.

III. Early Adulthood

A. Expectations about future: direction, expectations about marriage, family, work.

B. Work history:

How was first job obtained? Trace work career in terms of places, positions, conditions, wages, numbers of men/women, differentials in wages and conditions, union involvement.

C. Social relationships, community/group involvement:

Who were associates? Importance of work associates? Community groups? Religious/social or political groups? Trace involvement in any of these groups/organizations.

Relationships to men/women; patterns of relationship, how time spent, when, under what circumstances? To whom turned when had a problem?

D. Living arrangements.

E. Control over earnings? How spent.

IV. Adult Roles/Life

Married or single? For each, trace expectations, pressures and attitudes toward work/career/marriage/family. And, for each explore a typical day at various points in her life.

A. Married women:

How met husband; decision to marry? Describe wedding, including special traditions/customs/beliefs. What were expectations about the relationship; work outside the home; the role inside the home; children?

What was brought into the marriage (money, property), and how was it handled? Description of husband, including education, occupation, etc.

Description of daily life, before and after birth of children: how was time spent in the home? What kinds of reading materials. Appliances in the home.

Relationship to husband: how was time spent together? With other couples? What was his attitude towards the role of woman/wife? How were disagreements/conflicts handled? What was the source of disagreements? How close was the relationship? How were decisions made?

Relationship to other women: under what circumstances; nature of relationships; shared "women's talk"? Confide in each other?

Children/family planning: what were plans, expectations about raising a family? Was first pregnancy planned? What were feelings about pregnancy? Embarrassment about being seen publicly? How dressed? Husband's attitudes?

Any knowledge of birth control? What? From where? Discussed with other women? Methods, if any, used? Effectiveness? Explore in detail where obtained.

Abortions? How many? By whom? Cost? Techniques? Self-induced abortions? "Premature births?" "Miscarriages?"

Childbirth: prenatal and maternity care: birth experiences, including description of circumstances, who attended, difficulties.

Child rearing: who made decisions? Amount of time spent with children how? Role imposed on children? Expectations? Any kinds of child guidance/rearing guides used?

Social life, activities outside the home: with whom? Activities? Political/social concerns: community service, women's clubs, PTA, suffrage, radical-reform movements.

If worked outside the home, how were family/work responsibilities handled? What kind of help was received? From whom? How was time divided? Describe routines. Any resentments about load of work?

Life after children left home.

Note: within the sequence, be sure to get information about the environment in which the family functioned; type of housing; standards of living; changes in occupation; mobility; effect on individual and family life of various economic, political, and social events.

B. If separated, divorced, or widowed, explore the reasons, feelings; how family was supported; difficulties of one-parent family situation, ways in which life changed.

C. Single women (much of the focus will be on work history and experiences and social relationships):

Expectations, attitudes toward marriage. Pressures to marry? Attitudes of others toward unmarried women?

Living arrangements?

Life of a single woman: problems in housing; social life; economic pressures.

Social life and experiences during the 1920s: clothing; meaning of the so-called revolution in manners and morals; relationships to men; sexuality.

Social relationship with men/women: kinds of relationships, kinds of activities, generated by whom.

Work/career: satisfaction of; importance of in social life; relationship to other workers. Obtain full work history, including mobility, opportunities, problems as a woman, sexual politics of workplaces.

Political/social consciousness, and involvements; reform organizations; women's organizations; professional organizations; community groups; union. Obtain full history.

Attitudes about women, women's issues.

V. Later Years

A. For married women: activities, interests, feelings in later life, after children are grown, after husband's death.

B. For all working women: retirement—feelings about; life and activities since.

C. For all women: menopause—feelings about; physiological problems; responses; effect on work life or home life. Hysterectomy?

VI. General

A. Reflecting on life: what was happiest time, most fulfilling? Most unhappy time? What would do differently?

B. Reflections on changing role, position of women: comparison to own youth; attitudes towards women's movement today; role of women.

C. Within the context of each period discussed, be sure to explore the effects of various events, movements on her life, e.g., suffrage movement, WW I, Depression, WW II, any local events of significance in the area where she lived and/or worked.

Interview Guide for "The Twentieth Century Trade Union Woman: Vehicle for Social Change," developed by the Project at the University of Michigan (1977).

I. Family Background

Do you remember your grandparents? Do you remember your mother talking about her parents? Do you remember things your father said about his parents?

What did your father tell you about his boyhood? Where was he born? At what age did he begin to work?

What did your other tell you about her childhood? Where was she born? Did she work outside the home as a child? As a young woman? What kinds of responsibilities or chores did she do around the house as a child?

What did you like to do with your mother?

What did you like to do with your father?

What did your mother do most of her life? Did she work outside the home after she married? Was she working at any time when you were growing up? What were her hopes for herself? What were her hopes for her children? For you in particular? How much schooling did she have? Did she take an interest in her community? In politics? What were her views?

Was your father's background similar to your mother's? How much schooling did he have? What did he do for a living? How did his job affect the family? Did he take an interest in politics? What were his views? Did he talk with your mother about these things? What were his hopes for himself? For his children? For you?

Were you closer to one parent than the other? Which parent did you admire more? As a child, did you want to live a life like your parents' when you grew up?

How many years did you live in the house/apartment where you were born? What was that house like? The neighborhood? The town? How did you feel about the place? Who lived with you when you were growing up (grandparents; boarders; how many people)?

Who were your companions as a child? Did you have brothers and sisters (birth order, spacing)? What was your relationship to your brothers and sisters? [To] whom were you closest?

What chores or responsibilities did you have as a child? Did you ever think boys had an easier time?

What did you daydream about becoming when you grew up?

Was religion important to you as a child? In what way?

What kinds of arguments were there in your family? Was your family in any way different than the neighbors in your community? How did you feel about that?

II. Education

What did you think of school? What subjects did you like? Did you have any favorite teachers?

What did your family think about school? Did they have different ideas for boys than for girls?

Were your classmates from the same background as you (ethnic, socio-economic, religious)? What about the teachers?

When did you stop going to formal school? Why? Did you ever wish you had gone further?

Were you ever involved in other kinds of school such as settlement house classes, union, YWCA; or other workers' education classes? What did you think of those experiences? What did you think of the teachers?

Did students ever talk about political events of the times among themselves? Often? Did you participate in this?

Is there anything special about your early schooling that may have contributed to your later union activism?

III. Community Political Background

Describe the community in which you first lived. Did neighbors get together informally? Were you ever active in community organizations?

Did you belong to any religious, social, or political groups as a young girl? In later life? (Construct history of involvement.)

What were the first political group you ever joined? Were you aware of any splits in that group over different positions? Did you take sides?

How did your political views change over the years?

IV. Work Experience

How did you get your first job? What did the work involve? How old were you? did you expect to keep it a long time? How much did you earn? What did you do with the money? did you work among women or mixed sexes? Were your bosses women or men? What did you think of your co-workers? Of your boss? Did you make any friends on that first job? did you socialize with them outside of work? Why did you stop working there? What was the worst thing about that job?

Did you have a plan about future jobs? Did you think you would stop working when you got married? How did you get your next job?

Did you ever have a job where it was possible to move up to more money or more interesting work? What was the best job you ever had? What was the worst job? (Construct job history.)

Have you ever stopped working since you began? For what reasons?

What did you usually do when you came from work (chores as a young girl; domestic responsibilities later)?

(If applicable) How did your husband feel about you working? What kinds of child care arrangements did you make through the years? Was this an important part of your responsibilities?

During wars, women were often encouraged to work and then discouraged after the soldiers came home. Did you ever feel that pressure?

How do you think your work experiences would have been different if you were a man?

Have you ever been refused a job or a promotion because you weren't friendly enough to a male boss?

If you had a choice of all the jobs in the world and could get the right training, looking back, what kind of work would you choose to do?

(Omitted Union-related sections.)

VII. General

What was the most exciting part of your life? If you could relive any part of your life, when would it be?

(If you had) a daughter, would you want her to live through your experiences? What parts would you want her to avoid?

Have you been generally more comfortable working with women or men? Which have you worked with most? In what ways?

Were you active in getting women the vote (or other nonunion feminist issues)?

Do you remember reading anything, or seeing a movie, or meeting someone special that influenced your life dramatically?

Do you support the ERA? Do you think organized labor responds to women's needs?

Do you think women working within the labor movement were generally more or less effective because they were female?

What was the most frustrating part of your work with unions? Most satisfying? When did you feel that it wasn't worth it?

If you could be sixteen years old again, how would you relive your life? Would you still be involved with unions (marry/change number of children/education/travel)?

APPENDIX C

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR WOMEN STUDENT TEACHERS

Appendix C

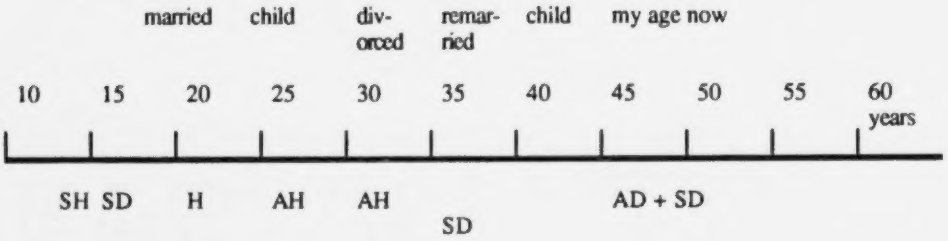
Questionnaire for Women Student Teachers

The purpose of this questionnaire is to gather information about women student teachers in Nepal in terms of their backgrounds and what type of work they want to do after graduation. Please answer the questions as honestly as you can. Please ask if there are any questions which you do not understand.

The instruction:
On the following diagram, could you please summarize your educational and work history up to the present. Use the abbreviations below and indicate
a) when you worked outside the home, studied, worked at home
b) your age
c) changes in marital status
d) when you had children
e) what you would like the future to look like in terms of your educational and work history

AH—work full time
AD—work part time
SH—study full time
SD—study part time
H—work at home, at home to care for children
AL—unemployed

The following is an example:



The following is your life-line history:

10
15
20
25
30
35
40
45
50
55
60 years

Use the space below [spaces omitted here] and on the next page to tell more about the most important parts of your life-line.

1. What was the most exciting part of your life? If you could relive any part of your life, when would it be?

2. (If you had) a daughter, would you want her to live through your experiences? What parts would you want her to avoid?

Background Questions

3. What is your religion?
_______ Hindu _________ Buddhist _________ Muslim _______ Christian

______ Other (Explain) ____

4. To what ethnic group (s) do you belong? ________________________________

5. What language(s) do you speak? ______________________________________

6. What language(s) do you read? _______________________________________

7. What language(s) do you write? ______________________________________

8. What community services have you or your family used?

9. Are there community services you would like to use, but do not know how to get in contact with them? Are there community services you would like to use, but they do not yet exist in your community?

10. Were you ever involved in other kinds of schooling or community projects, for example, projects or programs sponsored by international agencies or other groups?
_______ yes ________ no
If yes, what did you think of those experiences? What did you think of the teachers?

11. How much education did you have before you came into teacher training?

if less than grade 10 ________ primary (number of years)

________ secondary (number of years)

_____ grade 10 _____ more than grade 10 (what grade)

if more than grade 10

have you taken and passed the SLC? _____ yes ______ no

12. If you had more than grade 12 education or were working at a job before you became a student teacher, please write what you were doing.

13. Where do your parents live?
_________ Kathmandu
_________ a district administrative centre
_________ a town
_________ a village near a road
_________ a village less than a one day walk from a road
_________ a village that was a 1 to 2 day walk from a road
_________ a village that was more than 2 days' walk from a road

14. How often do you have contact with them?

15. Who do you ask for help when problems arise in your family?

16. Who do you ask for help when problems arise at school?
17. Are you available if your family needs your help?

18. In what preservice teacher education program are you?

_________ Women's Teacher Training Program ________ what month of program?

_________ Proficiency Certificate in Education ________ what month and what year?

19. Are your classmates in teacher training from the same background as you (ethnic, socio-economic, religious)? What about the teachers?

20. Describe your teacher training program of studies and which parts of it you like and dislike. Explain why.

21. What kind of school did you attend in primary school?

_______ public ________ private

22. Did you live with your parents while attending school? ______ yes ______ no
If no, where did you live and with whom; did this make it difficult for you or your family in any way?

23. Where did your family live when you were in primary school?
_________ Kathmandu
_________ a district administrative centre
_________ a town
_________ a village near a road
_________ a village less than a one day walk from a road
_________ a village that was a 1 to 2 day walk from a road
_________ a village that was more than 2 days' walk from a road

24. Please tell about or draw a picture of your primary school and explain any parts of the picture which might help the researcher to see what it looked like, where it was located, and how many children attended. Use the space below and on the back of this page.

25. Who made the decision for your to attend primary school?

26. Did anyone in your family help you with schoolwork?
____ yes _____ no
If yes, who? Describe who and how often.

27. How many years of primary school did you attend? ___________

28. What did you like best about primary schooling? Describe and explain why.

29. What did you like least about primary schooling?

30. What did your family think about school?

31. Did they have different ideas for boys than for girls?
____ yes _____ no
If yes, tell what these different ideas were and what you thought about them.

32. Were your classmates from primary school the same background as you (ethnic, socio-economic, religious)? What about the teachers?

33. Did you dropout of primary schooling at any time?
____ yes _____ no
If yes, why? Explain why you went back to school.

34. Did you have to repeat any grades of primary school?
____ yes _____ no
If yes, who? Explain why and which grades.

35. Was there anything about primary school that it made it difficult for you at home or in your community?
____ yes _____ no

If yes, who? Explain why.

36. Did you ever have to be absent for more than a day? _____ yes _____ no
If yes, explain why.

37. When you were in primary school, did the house your family lived in have electricity?
_______ yes _______ no

38. When you were in primary school, where did your family get drinking water?

_______ from a tap in the house _________ from a tap outside
_______ from a stream or river _________ other

If you said other, please describe how your family got water.

39. When you were in primary school, what kind of sanitation facilities did your family have?
______ indoor flush toilets ________ pit latrine _______ other

If you said other, please describe the type of sanitation facilities used.

40. What kind of sanitation facilities did your primary school have? For girls, for boys? Please describe.

41. What kind of school did you attend in high school?

_______ day school _________ boarding school

42. What did you think of high school? What did you think of the teachers?

43. What subjects did you like?

44. Were your classmates in high school from the same background as you (ethnic, socio-economic, religious)? What about the teachers?

45. Did you live with your family (parents) when you were going to high school?
_______ yes _______ no
If no, did this make it difficult for you or your family in any way?

46. When you were in high school, did the house your family lived in have electricity?
_______ yes _______ no

47. When you were in high school, where did your family get drinking water?

_______ from a tap in the house _________ from a tap outside
_______ from a stream or river _________ other

If you said other, please describe how your family got water. Use the space below or on the back of the page.

48. When you were in high school, what kind of sanitation facilities did your family have?

______ indoor flush toilets ________ pit latrine _______ other

If you said other, please describe the type of sanitation facilities used.

49. What kind of sanitation facilities did your high school have? For girls, for boys? Please describe.

50. Where did your family live when you were in high school?
_________ Kathmandu

_________ a district administrative centre
_________ a town
_________ a village near a road
_________ a village less than a one day walk from a road
_________ a village that was a 1 to 2 day walk from a road
_________ a village that was more than 2 days' walk from a road

51. How much education did your mother's mother have?

______ none ______ went to primary school ________ went to high school
______ completed high school _______ more than high school (If yes, describe below)

52. How much education did your mother's father have?

______ none ______ went to primary school ________ went to high school
______ completed high school _______ more than high school (If yes, describe below)

53. How much education did your mother have?

______ none ______ went to primary school ________ went to high school
______ completed high school _______ more than high school (If yes, describe below)

54. How much education did your father's mother have?

______ none ______ went to primary school ________ went to high school
______ completed high school _______ more than high school (If yes, describe below)

55. How much education did your father's father have?

______ none ______ went to primary school ________ went to high school
______ completed high school _______ more than high school (If yes, describe below)

56. How much education did your father have?

______ none ______ went to primary school ________ went to high school
______ completed high school _______ more than high school (If yes, describe below)

57. Was there anyone in your family who was not allowed or able to go to school?
____ yes _____ no
If yes, who? Explain why.

58. How many brothers do you have? __________

59. How many sisters do you have? __________

Questions about what you want to do after graduation

60. What made you decide to become a teacher?

61. What kind of teaching work do you want to do when you *first graduate* from teacher training? Explain why.

62. What do you want to be doing *two* years after graduation from teacher training?

63. What do you want to be doing *five* years after graduation from teacher training?

64. What do you want to be doing *ten* years after graduation from teacher training?

65. What would be the *good* things about working in a rural area?

66. What would be the *bad* things about working in a rural area?

67. Describe what kind of teacher you would like to be. Is there someone who influenced the kind of teacher you would like to be? Is there anything special about your early schooling that may have influenced you? Use the space below and on the back of the page.

68. Are there any other teachers in your family?
______ yes ________ no
If yes, how many and what kind of teaching work do they do?

69. When you were a very young girl was there someone you most wanted to be like? Why? Did this person influence you to become a teacher?

70. If you had a choice of all the jobs in the world and could get the right training, what kind of work would you choose to do? Why?

71. How do you think primary schools, high schools, and/or teacher training might be improved to meet the needs of girls and women?

72. What do you think the teaching role in the Universalization of Primary Education in Nepal should be? Please give some examples of the work which you think teachers could do to help in the effort. Use the space below and on the back of the page.

73. What do you think are the things that will allow women teachers to be important education workers in the Universalization of Primary Education in Nepal?

74. What do you think are the things that will make it difficult for women teachers to be important education workers in the Universalization of Primary Education in Nepal?

75. Do you have any other information that you think might be useful for this research?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE

APPENDIX D

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR IN-SERVICE WOMEN TEACHERS

Appendix D

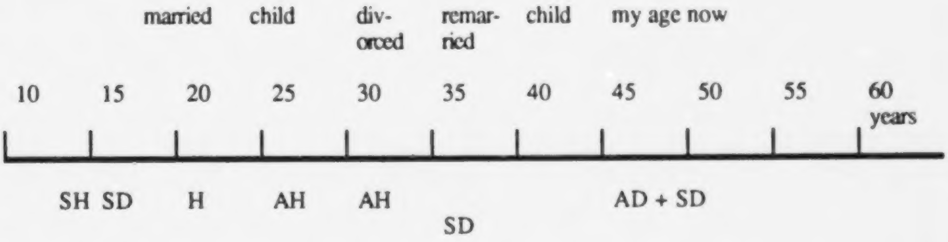
Questionnaire for in-service women teachers

The purpose of this questionnaire is to gather information about in-service women teachers in Nepal in terms of their backgrounds and what type of work they want to do after graduation. Please answer the questions as honestly as you can. Please ask if there are any questions which you do not understand.

The instruction:
On the following diagram, could you please summarize your educational and work history up to the present. Use the abbreviations below and indicate
a) when you worked outside the home, studied, worked at home
b) your age
c) changes in marital status
d) when you had children
e) what you would like the future to look like in terms of your educational and work history

AH—work full time
AD—work part time
SH—study full time
SD—study part time
H—work at home, at home to care for children
AL—unemployed

The following is an example:



The following is your life-line history:

10
15
20
25
30
35
40
45
50
55
60 years

Use the space below [space omitted here] and on the next page to tell more about the most important parts of your life-line.

1. What was the most exciting part of your life? If you could relive any part of your life, when would it be?

2. (If you had) a daughter, would you want her to live through your experiences? What parts would you want her to avoid?

Background Questions

3. What is your religion?
______ Hindu ________ Buddhist ________ Muslim ______ Christian

______ Other (Explain) ____

4. To what ethnic group (s) do you belong? ______________________________

5. What language(s) do you speak? _____________________________________

6. What language(s) do you read? ______________________________________

7. What language(s) do you write? ______________________________________

8. What community services have you or your family used?

9. Are there community services you would like to use, but do not know how to get in contact with them? Are there community services you would like to use, but which do not yet exist in your community?

10. Were you ever involved in other kinds of schooling or community projects, for example, projects or programs sponsored by international agencies or other groups?
_______ yes ________ no
If yes, what did you think of those experiences? What did you think of the teachers?

11. How much education did you have before you came into teacher training?

_______ less than grade 12 _______ grade 12 _____ more than grade 12

12. If you had more than grade 12 education or were working at a job before you became a student teacher, please write what you were doing.

13. Where do your parents live?
_________ Kathmandu
_________ a district administrative centre
_________ a town
_________ a village near a road
_________ a village less than a one day walk from a road
_________ a village that was a 1 to 2 day walk from a road
_________ a village that was more than 2 days' walk from a road

14. How often do you have contact with them?

15. Who do you ask for help when problems arise in your family?

16. Who do you ask for help when problems arise at school?

17. Are you available if your family needs your help?

18. Are your classmates in teacher training from the same background as you (ethnic, socio-economic, religious)? What about the teachers?

19. Describe your teacher training program of studies and which parts of it you like and dislike. Explain why. (Use the space below and on the back of this page.)
20. What kind of school did you attend in primary school?

_______ public _________ private

21. Did you live with your parents while attending school? ______ yes ______ no
If no, where did y ou live and with whom; did this make it difficult for you or your family in any way?

22. Where did your family live when you were in primary school?
_________ Kathmandu

_________ a district administrative centre
_________ a town
_________ a village near a road
_________ a village less than a one day walk from a road
_________ a village that was a 1 to 2 day walk from a road
_________ a village that was more than 2 days' walk from a road

23. Please tell about or draw a picture of your primary school and explain any parts of the picture which might help the researcher to see what it looked like, where it was located, and how many children attended. Use the space below and on the back of this page.

24. Who made the decision for your to attend primary school?

25. Did anyone in your family help you with schoolwork?
____ yes _____ no
If yes, who? Describe who and how often.

26. How many years of primary school did you attend? __________

27. What did you like best about primary schooling? Describe and explain why.

28. What did you like least about primary schooling?

29. What did your family think about school?

30. Did they have different ideas for boys than for girls?
____ yes _____ no
If yes, tell what these different ideas were and what you thought about them.

31. Were your classmates from primary school the same background as you (ethnic, socio-economic, religious)? What about the teachers?

32. Did you dropout of primary schooling at any time?
____ yes _____ no
If yes, why? Explain why you went back to school.

33. Did you have to repeat any grades of primary school?
____ yes _____ no
If yes, who? Explain why and which grades.

34. Was there anything about primary school that it made it difficult for you at home or in your community?
____ yes _____ no
If yes, who? Explain why.
35. Did you ever have to be absent for more than a day? _____ yes _____ no
If yes, explain why.

36. When you were in primary school, did the house your family lived in have electricity?
_______ yes _______ no

37. When you were in primary school, where did your family get drinking water?

_______ from a tap in the house _________ from a tap outside
_______ from a stream or river _________ other

If you said other, please describe how your family got water.

38. When you were in primary school, what kind of sanitation facilities did your family have?

______ indoor flush toilets ________ pit latrine _______ other

If you said other, please describe the type of sanitation facilities used.

39. What kind of sanitation facilities did your primary school have? For girls, for boys? Please describe.

40. What kind of school did you attend in high school?

_______ day school _________ boarding school

41. What did you think of high school? What did you think of the teachers?

42. What subjects did you like?

43. Were your classmates in high school from the same background as you (ethnic, socio-economic, religious)? What about the teachers?

44. Did you live with your family (parents) when you were going to high school?
_______ yes _______ no
If no, did this make it difficult for you or your family in any way?

45. When you were in high school, did the house your family lived in have electricity?
_______ yes _______ no

46. When you were in high school, where did your family get drinking water?

_______ from a tap in the house _________ from a tap outside
_______ from a stream or river _________ other

If you said other, please describe how your family got water. Use the space below or on the back of the page.

47. When you were in high school, what kind of sanitation facilities did your family have?

______ indoor flush toilets ________ pit latrine _______ other

If you said other, please describe the type of sanitation facilities used.

48. What kind of sanitation facilities did your high school have? For girls, for boys? Please describe.

49. Where did your family live when you were in high school?
_________ Kathmandu
_________ a district administrative centre
_________ a town
_________ a village near a road
_________ a village less than a one day walk from a road
_________ a village that was a 1 to 2 day walk from a road
_________ a village that was more than 2 days' walk from a road

50. How much education did your mother's mother have?

______ none ______ went to primary school ________ went to high school
______ completed high school _______ more than high school (If yes, describe below)

51. How much education did your mother's father have?

______ none ______ went to primary school ________ went to high school
______ completed high school _______ more than high school (If yes, describe below)

52. How much education did your mother have?

______ none ______ went to primary school ________ went to high school
______ completed high school _______ more than high school (If yes, describe below)

53. How much education did your father's mother have?

______ none ______ went to primary school ________ went to high school
______ completed high school _______ more than high school (If yes, describe below)

54. How much education did your father's father have?

______ none ______ went to primary school ________ went to high school
______ completed high school _______ more than high school (If yes, describe below)

55. How much education did your father have?

______ none ______ went to primary school ________ went to high school
______ completed high school _______ more than high school (If yes, describe below)

56. Was there anyone in your family who was not allowed or able to go to school?
____ yes _____ no
If yes, who? Explain why.

57. How many brothers do you have? __________

58. How many sisters do you have? __________

Questions about your teaching career

59. From which teacher training school or program did you graduate?

60. What year did you graduate? 19_____

61. Please describe your work experience in teaching. State what kind of work you have done, how long you did it, and whether you worked in an urban or rural place. If you need more space, please write on the back of the form.

62. What made you decide to become a teacher?

63. What made you decide to do a B.Ed. degree?

64. In which year of your program are you?
_________ Bachelor in Education (2 years) ________ what month and what year?

_________ Bachelor in Education (1 year) ________ what month?

_________ Other Explain ____

If other, where are you in the training process? ____________________________________

65. What do you want to do when you graduate?

66. Describe what kind of teacher you would like to be. Is there someone who influenced the kind of teacher you would like to be? Is there anything special about your early schooling that may have influenced you? Use the space below and on the back of the page.

67. Are there any other teachers in your family?
______ yes ________ no
If yes, how many and what kind of teaching work do they do?

68. When you were a very young girl was there someone you most wanted to be like? Why? Did this person influence you to become a teacher?

69. If you had a choice of all the jobs in the world and could get the right training, what kind of work would you choose to do? Why?

70. How do you think primary schools, high schools, and/or teacher training might be improved to meet the needs of girls and women?

71. What do you think the teaching role in the Universalization of Primary Education in Nepal should be? Please give some examples of the work which you think teachers could do to help in the effort. Use the space below and on the back of the page.

72. What do you think are the things that will allow women teachers to be important education workers in the Universalization of Primary Education in Nepal?

73. What do you think are the things that will make it difficult for women teachers to be important education workers in the Universalization of Primary Education in Nepal?

74. Do you have any other information that you think might be useful for this research?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE

APPENDIX E

INFORMED CONSENT FOR QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONDENTS

Appendix E

Informed Consent for Questionnaire Respondents

Project Title: Nepalese Women Teachers and Teacher Trainees Speak: Contemporary Life Stories and Educational Reform in Nepal (1971 to the Present)

Researcher:
Linda Z. Schulz
Ph.D. student
Department of Educational Foundations
University of Alberta
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T6G 2G5

The purpose of this research is to look at the context in which the change to universalization of primary education is happening in Nepal. Focus will be on the role of teachers in the process. If you agree to take part in this project, you will be asked to answer some questions. It will take approximately one hour or less. The researcher will not share your answers with anyone else in Nepal.

This is to certify that I,
____
(print name)
hereby agree to take part in the above named project. I understand that no one will be able to identify my answers in any report or presentation of the findings. I also understand that I may choose not to be a part of this project.

______________________ ______________________ ______________________

Signature Witness Date

APPENDIX F

C0NSENT FOR PHOTOGRAPHS

Appendix F

Consent for Photographs

Project Title: Nepalese Women Teachers and Teacher Trainees Speak: Contemporary Life Stories and Educational Reform in Nepal (1971 to the Present)

Researcher:
Linda Z. Schulz
Ph.D. student
Department of Educational Foundations
University of Alberta
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T6G 2G5

The purpose of this research is to look at the context in which the change to universalization of primary education is occurring in Nepal. Focus will be on the involvement of teachers in the process. Photographs and slides will help me in describing and explaining the context in which teachers practice in Nepal to colleagues and other professionals at conference presentations.

This is to certify that I, ____
(print name)
have agreed to have my picture taken and that these pictures may be used by the researcher when presenting this research at professional conferences.

____________________ ____________________ ____________________

Signature Witness Date

APPENDIX G

EXAMPLES OF FIELD NOTES

Appendix G

Examples of field notes

When I was in Nepal from January through June of 1993, I had no trouble at all finding people who were not only willing to talk to me about my study, but who were excited and interested that someone was doing this kind of research. But my thoughts kept returning to why no one else had spoken with women who are and who are becoming teachers in Nepal to elicit their advice and support for improving the situation for girls and women to participate more fully in the educational activities of the country? According to one expatriate consultant of School Education and Teacher Training (with an international consulting firm hired by ADB to provide technical assistance on their current Primary Education Development Project in Nepal), "It may be that everyone thought someone else was already doing this kind of work" (Interview, February 25, 1993). This man is also the former headmaster of a school in a medium-sized Nepalese city, someone who not only worked hard to bring in women teachers, but, along with his wife, to fashion an exemplary boys school into one which is presently co-ed. He believes that he was able to hire some of the finest women teachers in the area and that their "extraordinary" life stories are ones that I would want to have in my study. While there seemed to be consensus on the significance of the research, and expressed interest in my results, neither the development agencies, lending banks, nor HMG/N had been able to address this keen interest.[1]

When I arrived in Kathmandu on January 12th, 1993, it was also my intention to form a picture of the situation for women who are and who are becoming teachers currently in Nepal from the perspective of those interested in and responsible for encouraging and making possible women's participation in the teaching profession. It was not clear to me whether the EGWN (Education of Girls and Women in Nepal), a project agreement between His Majesty's Government of Nepal (HMG/N) and the United Nation's Children's Fund (UNICEF), giving priority to the training of women teachers, especially for B-Level training for eight grade (under-SLC) girls was 1) still underway, albeit, in some revised form, or 2) had been made redundant if not "extinct" by the fact that the government had dismissed undertrained, under-SLC, temporary teachers in 1988 and temporary but trained teachers in 1989 and attempted to dismiss permanent, trained, non-SLC teachers in 1990 (Huq, interview, January 22, 1993). (Note: These dismissals and attempted dismissals may have been an effort by HMG/N to systematically raise the standards of primary school teachers or simply to remove deadwood, but given the large numbers of untrained teachers in the primary sector, I wondered why a less harsh and more remedial approach could not have been attempted first to bring teachers into the system. If it was an attempt to raise teaching standards, it still seems a poor choice given the numbers of untrained teachers in the primary sector and especially because it negates the past achievements of agencies like UNICEF and Nepalese women like Mrs. Neelam Basnet (recently retired chief of the Office of Women's Education Project [OWEP] in the Ministry of Education, Culture, and Social Welfare) who have been working to improve the numbers of women teachers in a project-specific experimental fashion for two decades and who have persistently succeeded in drawing attention to the general situation regarding girls' education and the need for increasing the number of women teachers.)

When I arrived in Kathmandu on January 12th, 1993, it was also my intention to form a picture of the situation for women who are and who are becoming teachers currently in Nepal from the perspective of those interested in and responsible for encouraging and making possible women's participation in the teaching profession. It was not clear to me whether the EGWN (Education of Girls and Women in Nepal), a project agreement between His Majesty's Government of Nepal (HMG/N) and the United Nation's Children's Fund (UNICEF), giving priority to the training of women teachers, especially for B-Level training for eight grade (under-SLC) girls was 1) still underway, albeit, in some revised form, or 2) had been made redundant if not "extinct" by the fact that the government had dismissed undertrained, under-SLC, temporary teachers in 1988 and temporary but trained teachers in 1989 and attempted to dismiss permanent, trained, non-SLC teachers in 1990 (Huq, interview, January 22, 1993). (Note: These dismissals and

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Social Welfare) who have been working to improve the numbers of women teachers in a project-specific experimental fashion for two decades and who have persistently succeeded in drawing attention to the general situation regarding girls' education and the need for increasing the number of women teachers.). However, when I talked to Dr. Khaniya, recently appointed Director of the Basic and Primary Education Project (BPEP) at MOEC, he said that he had never even heard of EGWN.

Need to buy:

small pot to boil water

water filter: check on whether water is boiled or filtered here

iodine pills

Need to know:

how to use taxis/autorickshaws

if my partner does not get nontourist visa where does he go to get 3 month extension?

January 14 Celebration:

Samyak Mahadan (celebrated every 12 years)—Buddhist

Maghe Sankrati (celebrated every year on the first day of the Nepalese month of Magh, reminder to eat winter foods, e.g., ghee, sugar (rock candy), yams (boiled)—all Nepalese

January
30—Day off. Went with Nepalese language instructor Prakash Shrestha to Pashupatinath (the most important Hindu temple in Nepal and one of the most important Shiva temples on the subcontinent), Bodhnath (largest Buddhist stupa in Nepal), and Bhaktapur (third major city in Kathmandu Valley).

31—Met with Dr. T. R. Khaniya, Director, Primary Education Project, at Ministry of Education

Copied out pertinent sections of Basic and Primary Education Master Plan because they only have one copy and taped myself reading portions of it.

February
16—Received letter of recommendation for non-tourist visa from MOEC.

Received fax from IDRC.

Went to Immigration and told needed seven photos and my son needs three: Had pictures taken on New Road.

17—Borrowed 5000 rupees from Sri Ram Lamichhane and Bijaya Thapa (CERID).

Mix-up on time of meeting with Philip O'Meara and Val Young: Rescheduled for Feb. 23.

Went to Immigration and told decision on Tuesday, Feb. 23.

18—Phoned Neelam Basnet, former Chief OWEP. Told she is too ill to see me and to phone tomorrow.

Democracy Day, everything closed.

19—Interviewed Neelam Basnet at her home. Read her book in evening.

20—Transcribed interview with Dean of Education.

21—Completed transcription of Dean's interview.

Faxed Constance Lim/IDRC.

Phoned Basnet to thank her for interview and to chat. Phoned Dean to check on status of questionnaires being pre-tested and possibility of arranging to go to — campus where she said I would have access to in-service women teachers (about 20). Unfortunately, this whole next week, due to elections, the university campuses are closed.

22—Began transcribing interview with ADB senior official.

Received call at 8.30 am from Mr. — (Immigration) looking for a bribe to process visa. Pretended to not understand him. Non-tourist visa issued for six months without further incident.

23—Meeting with Philip O'Meara and (Canadian Consular officer) Val Young, informally, at their home.

Continued transcribing ADB senior official interview.

24—Make appointment to see Consultant—School Education and Teacher Training, SAGRIC International (Australian Consultant working for ADB).

Continued transcribing ADB senior official interview.

Notes on (1992) National Planning Commission, HMG-N/UNICEF *Children and women of Nepal: A situational analysis*:

p. 145 Primary Teacher Training

—analysis of current status

Education Master Plan states that:

(1) There is no effective structure for coordinating primary teacher training

(2) No clear and consistent policy on duration and focus

(3) Project objectives have influenced content of short duration in-service training, resulting in little coordination of either curriculum or delivery mechanism

(4) short supply of professional and competent trainers needed to improve the quality and internal efficiency of the primary training programme

Attached a note from a Gurung woman who pleads that she would like to accompany my son, myself, and my partner to — to be our helper.

I feel depressed.

very ill; missed visit to Swyambunath

a whole page of phone numbers

found a quote from someone named Russell: "Teachers are, more than any other class, the guardians of civilization" in *The Rising Nepal* (Friday Supplement) written by Dr. D. P. Bhandari, professor, Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University

Pashupatinath–between Kathmandu and airport

Temple on the banks of the Bagmati River. The most important Hindu Temple in Nepal and one of the most important Shiva Temples on the subcontinent. Many monkeys on the hillside and all over the terraces looking down into the temple. Pashupati means Lords of the Beasts. Within two weeks the great festival of Shivaratri will attract thousands from India (very crowded). Snake-charmers, everywhere, and oh I don't like snakes.

Bodnath—largest stupa (Buddhist religious structure) in Nepal (one of the largest in the world). A religious centre for Tibetans. Film director in Kathmandu filming "The little Buddha," problem with name of film, changed to "The little lama."

saw a wedding procession and another celebratig when a boy child becomes a student, the child's hair shorn except for 1 ponytail at the very top of his head (in Bhaktapur, the third major town in Kathmandu Valley)

babysat, went to UNICEF offices (finally learned how to get tempo/autorickshaw, don't act like a rube tourist, just get in and say where you are going, then driver does not argue)

If I hear the word "big problem" with regard to my nontourist visa one more time…

A Gurung young man wants to work for me, to take care of my son when we go to —

He wants to learn English. He cannot be the kind of student he would like to be here in Kathmandu. He comes from the place we are headed to.

Baby and me are all stuffed up from colds/allergies—KATHMANDU IS POLLUTED!

A wedding reception at the hotel we are staying—300 people in the lobby, invited for dinner.

Questions for Neelam Basnet:

Tell me about your involvement with the women's education project and EGWN.

UNICEF pulled out of involvement with EGWN because they felt the need for a different strategy.

What changes have you seen for women teachers?

Are you hopeful?

What mistakes have been made? What are the successes?

A map of where we are going to

notes about the women teachers I might get to meet:

a woman who is respected and accepted; went to Australia for 6 months: *Guru-heart*

her best friend, a Phys. Ed. teacher, captain of the National Women's Volleyball Team

business cards pasted to every page

I should have a card too

ill with flu/cold, severe earrache, shopped for hot water bottle

waiting for a call from Grindlay's Bank about research funds from IDRC (March)

get laundry back!

shoes, shirts, shorts,

British library

A holiday in Chitwan National Park; van broke down outside of Bharatpur, broken wheel spring

a note about where to meet the Assistant Campus Chief, near pipal tree

pages about questionnaires left at campus

photocopying in —!!

life-line in questionnaire needs to be changed

it might have stated where would you like to get married, have children

how many children would you like to have?

show ages of important moments in your life

a principal tells me his daughter is very compassionate

"We Rais are very short-tempered"

April 30, Rai teacher is going to appear in Hear'N Aid/ Say No to Drugs Music Fest

She sings and dances Madonna songs

Walked to campus, Assistant campus chief did not show

More and more I do not want to go there

Waited in staffroom, asked one male professor about campus chief's whereabouts

He looked up from the book he was reading but did not answer me

Waited and waited in the staffroom and a whole a room of male professors were laughing, making jokes, one man grabbed his —, I started to get a feeling that I shouldn't be there

Outside one male student calls to me, "Madame," and points backward to the Education building at another standing there dressed in yellow slacks

I shrug, go on

See a sign "Communist meeting of students"

Its getting so hot I order some thin, cotten clothes to be made

long talk with expatriate Canadian who owns a restaurant and is married to a Tamang, adopted a homeless child

My partner returns to Kathmandu to continue work for CERID; he takes the key to our workroom

I am locked out; no money, no computer access

First girls school in the district, Saraswati, goddess of learning, overlooking garden

uniform: white blouse, red skirt, red sweater

Classes 1-6 free

the government announced this year that up to Class 7 free

the government is not successful in this endeavor

I should ask about Saraswati

Guru-lekhika tells me

Went to Kanya school, took along son for company

Married Gurung teacher told me she doesn't have time for any further interviews

She thinks I am privileged and doesn't see the sacrifices I have made to get educated, to have a family, and to do this research

"Maybe your husband is unhappy because he has to stay in the house and take care of your son" she says

"Yes, that's probably so," I agree

But in Nepal, my partner is happy in house, I am happy outside, travelling, moving around, meeting people, everywhere

I am poor too not rich, it's relative

Principal of one school wants to know if I've learned anything about why women become teachers that is any different from men

I say that would also be an interesting study…why do men come to be teachers?

And I ask him, he says, oh that's so long ago, I haven't thought that far back in some time

then he clams up

but he wants to know if I have any startling or extraordinary information

I say no, not really, it all fits together, and I tell him, it is so very difficult for women to become teachers in Nepal, the ones who do are capability-wise going to be much stronger.

He says, "interesting."

He asks, what makes it harder here than in other countries?

I said well in the village if a girl needs to study and there is only a male teacher then she is not likely going to be able to go to his house.

Addresses of women teachers